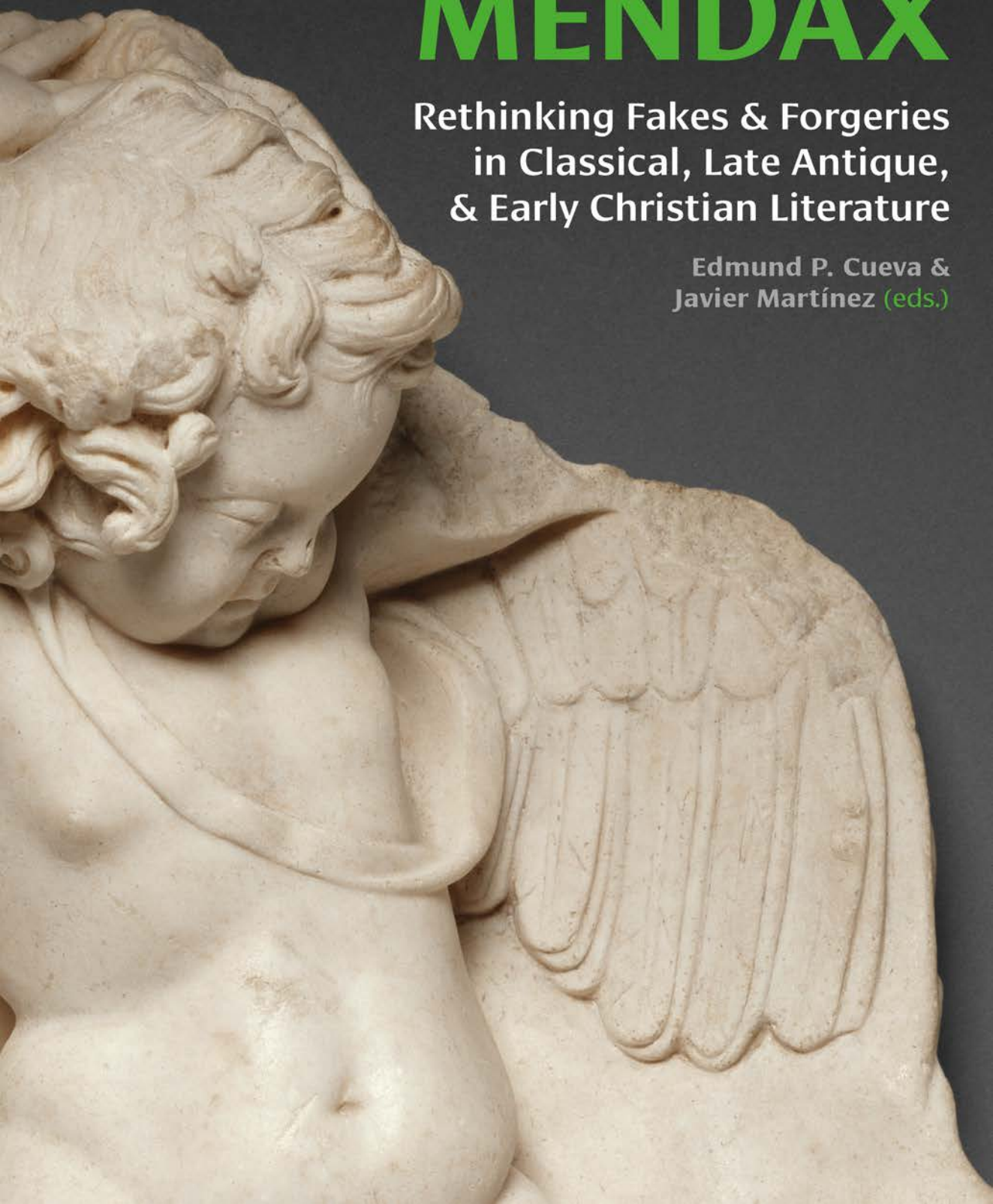


# SPLENDIDE MENDAX

Rethinking Fakes & Forgeries  
in Classical, Late Antique,  
& Early Christian Literature

Edmund P. Cueva &  
Javier Martínez (eds.)



VISIT...

LANZAROTE  
*Caliente*.COM

Splendide Mendax:  
Rethinking Fakes and Forgeries  
in Classical, Late Antique, and Early Christian Literature



# Splendide Mendax

*Rethinking Fakes and Forgeries in  
Classical, Late Antique, and  
Early Christian Literature*

edited by

Edmund P. Cueva  
and  
Javier Martínez

BARKHUIS  
GRONINGEN

2016

Book design: Barkhuis

Cover Design: Nynke Tiekstra, Noordwolde

Image on cover: Unknown, Statuette of a Sleeping Cupid, 50 - 100, Marble  $13.5 \times 41.9 \times 26$  cm ( $5 \frac{5}{16} \times 16 \frac{1}{2} \times 10 \frac{1}{4}$  in.), The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program.

ISBN 9789491431982

Copyright © 2016 the authors and editors

All rights reserved. No part of this publication or the information contained herein may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, by photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the authors.

Although all care is taken to ensure the integrity and quality of this publication and the information herein, no responsibility is assumed by the publishers nor the authors for any damage to property or persons as a result of operation or use of this publication and/or the information contained herein.

# Contents

|                                                                                                                                                                                |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Acknowledgments                                                                                                                                                                | IX  |
| I. Introduction                                                                                                                                                                | 1   |
| JAVIER MARTÍNEZ<br>Cheap Fictions and Gospel Truths                                                                                                                            | 3   |
| II. Classical Works                                                                                                                                                            | 21  |
| BRIAN R. DOAK<br>Remembering the Future, Predicting the Past:<br><i>Vaticinia ex eventu</i> in the Historiographic Traditions<br>of the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East | 23  |
| GAIUS C. STERN<br>Imposters in Ancient Persia, Greece, and Rome                                                                                                                | 55  |
| III. Greek Literature                                                                                                                                                          | 73  |
| REYES BERTOLÍN<br>The Search for Truth in <i>Odyssey</i> 3 and 4                                                                                                               | 75  |
| VALENTINA PROSPERI<br>The Trojan War: Between History and Myth                                                                                                                 | 93  |
| EMILIA RUIZ YAMUZA<br><i>Protagoras's</i> Myth: Between Pastiche and Falsification                                                                                             | 113 |
| JAKUB FILONIK<br>Impiety Avenged: Rewriting Athenian History                                                                                                                   | 125 |

|                                                                                                    |     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| MIKEL LABIANO                                                                                      |     |
| <i>Dramas or Niobus: Aristophanic Comedy or Spurious Play?</i>                                     | 141 |
| EDMUND P. CUEVA                                                                                    |     |
| ὁ γὰρ βούλεται τοῦθ' ἕκαστος καὶ οἶεται:<br>Dissembling in the Ancient Greek Novel                 | 157 |
| IV. Latin Literature                                                                               | 175 |
| ANDREW SILLETT                                                                                     |     |
| Quintus Cicero's <i>Commentariolum</i> :<br>A Philosophical Approach to Roman Elections            | 177 |
| KLAUS LENNARTZ                                                                                     |     |
| Not Without My Mother:<br>The Obligate Rhetoric of Daphne's Transformation                         | 193 |
| MICHAEL MECKLER                                                                                    |     |
| Comparative Approaches to the <i>Historia Augusta</i>                                              | 205 |
| V. Late Antique Works                                                                              | 217 |
| ANNE-CATHERINE BAUDOIN                                                                             |     |
| Truth in the Details:<br>The <i>Report of Pilate to Tiberius</i> as an Authentic Forgery           | 219 |
| KRISTI EASTIN                                                                                      |     |
| <i>Virgilius Accuratissimus</i> :<br>The "Authentic" Illustrations of William Sandby's 1750 Virgil | 239 |
| LUIGI PEDRONI                                                                                      |     |
| The Salii at the <i>Nonae</i> of October:<br>Reading Lyd. <i>Mens.</i> 4.138 W                     | 273 |
| CRISTIAN TOLSA                                                                                     |     |
| Evidence and Speculation<br>about Ptolemy's Career in Olympiodorus                                 | 287 |



|                                                                                                                                            |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| VI. Early Christian Works                                                                                                                  | 301 |
| SCOTT BROWN                                                                                                                                |     |
| Mar Saba 65: Twelve Enduring Misconceptions                                                                                                | 303 |
| ARGYRI KARANASIOU                                                                                                                          |     |
| A Euripidised Clement of Alexandria<br>or a Christianised Euripides? The Interplay<br>of Authority between Quoting Author and Cited Author | 331 |
| MARKUS MÜLKE                                                                                                                               |     |
| Heretic Falsification in Cyprian's <i>Epistulae</i> ?                                                                                      | 347 |
| Contributors                                                                                                                               | 355 |
| Indices                                                                                                                                    | 361 |
| <i>Index locorum</i>                                                                                                                       | 361 |
| General Index                                                                                                                              | 363 |



## Acknowledgements

This collective volume has seen the light thanks to the kind acceptance of Barkhuis to whom we would like to express our sincerest gratitude. Publication and research of the kind on which this book is based would be impossible without the resources provided by the Government of the Principality of Asturias (Plan de Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación de Asturias / FICYT) and the funding of the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation (Project FFI2013-41170-P).



# I

## Introduction



# Cheap Fictions and Gospel Truths \*

JAVIER MARTÍNEZ  
University of Oviedo

δεδίδαχεν δὲ μάλιστα Ὅμηρος καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ψευδῇ λέγειν ὥς δεῖ  
(Aristot. *Poet.* 1460a20)

Homer, more than anyone else, taught poets the right way to tell falsehoods  
(trans. A. Kenny).

## I

We might not expect the subject of classical fakes and forgeries to be making newspaper headlines in the twenty-first century, yet on April 10, 2014, the *New York Times* felt obliged to step into a recent and heated academic debate. The headline in question reads: “Papyrus Referring To Jesus’ Wife Is More Likely Ancient Than Fake, Scientists Say.”<sup>1</sup> The papyrus in question was first described in 2012, at a conference in Rome, by Karen King of the Harvard Divinity School, who somewhat provocatively described the fragment of text (on a rectangular papyrus scrap approximately three inches by one and a half inches) as “The Gospel of Jesus’ Wife.”

The 2014 scientific investigation reported by the *New York Times* immediately led to the broadcast of a television documentary on the papyrus, filmed in 2012 at the time of King’s conference presentation in Rome but withheld from broadcast for over a year, presumably on the basis that such a surprising bit of counterintuitive textual evidence concerning one of history’s best-known bachelors ought to be properly vetted before being publicized. But in a matter of weeks, a German papyrologist issued a new challenge to the fragment’s authenticity, demonstrating the handwriting was similar to that on another fragment

---

\* This paper is based on research funded by project FFI2013-41170 of the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness.

<sup>1</sup> Goodstein 2014.

more obviously forged. In 2015, at the time of publication of the present volume, the controversy continues: at Harvard, Karen King has published two formal responses to her critics, while at Columbia University laboratory tests of the ink on the papyrus are being touted as proof of its authenticity.

Implicit in any discussion of fakes and forgeries is the question of belief: considered in the largest possible sense, this question encompasses not only religions, as the traditional arena for belief, but also fictions, and the willing suspension of disbelief they require. When the *New York Times* reported on King's initial announcement in 2012, they felt it necessary to concede that the discovery sounded like the stuff of bad popular fiction, reporting drily:

The notion that Jesus had a wife was the central conceit of the best seller and movie “The Da Vinci Code.” But Dr. King said she wants nothing to do with the code or its author: “At least, don’t say this proves Dan Brown was right.”<sup>2</sup>

But let us ask: what would it mean to “prove” an author of fiction was “right”? Does the popularity of the 2003 novel *The Da Vinci Code*, Dan Brown's preposterous farrago about a two-thousand-year conspiracy to cover up the marital status of Jesus of Nazareth, explain why a few sentences in Coptic merit newspaper headlines and television documentaries? One need not read Brown's novel to find it preposterous: the author's literary offenses begin with his title, which indicates a belief that “Da Vinci” is Leonardo's surname, and which raises the question of why he didn't entitle it *The Of Nazareth Code*. Why then should King be concerned about any connection between his popular novel and her papyrological announcement?

An unknown purchaser brings a suspicious papyrus fragment—with murky paper trail from a suspicious and conveniently dead dealer, containing text that seems eerily to mirror the plot of a bestseller—to be authenticated by a Harvard scholar who is not primarily a papyrologist; the Harvard scholar duly authenticates it. Even Dan Brown might consider such a story hard to believe, yet it is true. Despite King's understandable reluctance to invoke Dan Brown in discussing this Coptic fragment, one fact must be conceded: *The Da Vinci Code* may have the usual accoutrements of a popular thriller—murders, chases, double-crosses, and conspiracies—but it ultimately offers a sort of critique of Christianity from the standpoint of popular feminism, not unlike another work first published in 2003, Karen King's *The Gospel of Mary of Magdala: Jesus and the First Woman Apostle*. To draw such a comparison is not to denigrate Karen

---

<sup>2</sup> Goodstein 2012.



King's scholarship, but to historicize it. King herself would presumably be the first to admit that the kind of work she does—in which the historical role of women in Christianity is examined in close and critical detail—would not have been possible a generation earlier. In 2003, Kenneth Woodward accused King of practicing “a certain kind of ideologically committed feminist scholarship”; King responded that the accusation represented “more an expression of Woodward's distaste for feminism than a review or even a critique of [the] scholarship.”<sup>3</sup> If King's own scholarly investigations are a reflection of larger cultural concerns, it could be argued that Dan Brown's novel reflects the same concerns, but at the other end of the intellectual spectrum. Scholars and novelists alike are in the business of constructing narratives that sound plausible from disconnected details.

One thing is clear, though. If King has authenticated a forgery, then she has essentially used her own credibility and that of Harvard to abet and encourage criminal forgery in the antiquities market. If forgers have produced a parody of an ancient text, it seems only fitting that King's approach to it has been a parody of responsible scholarship.

## 2

A work of popular fiction seems strangely to coincide with a newly-discovered Biblical manuscript, which may or may not be a forgery.

If these words could frame the issues around Karen King's “Gospel of Jesus' Wife” fragment, they might also be applied to a more complicated case, Morton Smith's Mar Saba letter. This document—discussed at length in this volume by one of the most persistent and credible defenders of its authenticity, Scott G. Brown—purports to offer quotation by Clement of Alexandria of an alternate text of the Gospel of Mark, promulgated by the Carpocratian Gnostics. Arguments about the authenticity of Smith's discovery have been advanced since he first presented the text to scholars in 1960, at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature. Smith's announcement at this time was reported on the front page of (where else?) the *New York Times*.<sup>4</sup> The next day the newspaper reporter published a follow-up article, quoting scholars who declared the Mar Saba letter an obvious forgery.

Why have the past fifteen years have seen intense revival of interest in denouncing the Mar Saba letter as a forgery? Full-length monographs intended to

---

<sup>3</sup> Sabar 2012.

<sup>4</sup> Knox 1960.

prove that Smith forged the Mar Saba letter himself have appeared from Stephen Carlson in 2005 and Peter Jeffery in 2007. Neither is an authority on patristics or the New Testament; Jeffery is a musicologist at Notre Dame (he has moved from Princeton since publishing the book on Morton Smith) and Carlson a patent attorney in Fairfax, Virginia, yet their books were issued by the university presses of Baylor and Yale. Carlson—by way of explaining how a lawyer has come to write a book about Clement of Alexandria—even invokes the inevitable:

I first heard of the *Secret Gospel of Mark* as a teenager in the 1980s when I read an extract of it quoted in the *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* series—a sensationalistic exposition of the supposed bloodline of Jesus Christ and Mary Magdalene, which has just resurfaced in the public's imagination as the background for the fictional thriller, *The Da Vinci Code*.<sup>5</sup>

Whether the Mar Saba letter is a forgery is open to debate, but it is clear that this recent criticism of it is largely reliant on the methods of fiction. Morton Smith is treated by these men as a fictional character: his psychology is explored, and bizarre hidden meanings are derived from his remarks and from the text of the letter, in an attempt to establish the motive for forgery, since the means and opportunity are more easily demonstrated.<sup>6</sup> Perhaps the most outlandish element has been the suggestion, first advanced in 2001 by Philip Jenkins and repeated by Robert M. Price in 2004, that Morton Smith was inspired by *The Mystery of Mar Saba*, a Dan Brown-style thriller published in 1940 by Evangelical Publishers of Toronto. The novel, written by James Hogg Hunter, involves a papyrus forged by Nazis, the “Shred of Nicodemus,” intended to demonstrate that Jesus did not actually rise from the dead. One wonders why a forged papyrus—rather than, say, the relative paucity of other historically-verifiable resurrections—would be necessary to discredit the Gospels on this point. But when a novelist can presuppose belief on the part of his audience (as presumably one whose work bears the imprint of the Evangelical Publishers of Toronto can do) then perhaps that novelist may worry less about suspension of disbelief regarding his narrative.

None of the men advancing this claim addresses the obvious point, though. If this 1940 Christian agitprop novel was so popular that Morton Smith must

---

<sup>5</sup> Carlson 2005, xv.

<sup>6</sup> I have elsewhere commented upon Anthony Grafton's definition of forgery, in *Forgers and Critics* (1990), as “a sort of crime” to be “investigated” for “motive, means, and opportunity.” See Martínez, “Foreword” in 2014 (vii).

have read it, why did it take over four decades for anyone to suggest the novel was Smith's source? Smith's discovery at Mar Saba was front page news in 1960: if the novel was so popular, why did no reader see the words "Mar Saba" and draw the connection then? It took four decades before Philip Jenkins made the suggestion upon which Smith's detractors have now seized.<sup>7</sup> Are scholars of the New Testament simply too accustomed to a gap of several decades between a remarkable event and the earliest public notice of it?

Brown in 2005 found no significant parallels between this novel and Smith's account, but both Carlson and Jeffery accept unhesitatingly that the novel gave Smith an inspiration for forgery. Since then, Francis Watson of Durham University has exerted the most effort in the attempt to prove that Smith must have read this novel, and therefore forged the Mar Saba letter. Watson's 2010 article claims that it can be proven "beyond suspicion" that Smith was inspired by this novel—responding to the objections of Scott Brown on this point, Watson claims that "it requires no 'romantic desire' to notice the analogies with the other 'popular book,' only a careful reading of both texts."<sup>8</sup> But the "careful reading" Watson offers is frankly surreal as a work of scholarship; it includes a full transcription of the endpaper illustration from *The Mystery of Mar Saba*, where an artist has sketched the Greek text of the "Shred of Nicodemus." Carlson and Jeffery employ frankly ludicrous methods of argument to demonstrate that Smith confessed his own forgery within the text of the Mar Saba letter; in passages like this, Watson knows their methods and applies them:

The forger is also a *smith*, the forge is also a *smithy*, and in forging a metal object one also *smiths* it. And so, when the forger becomes a counterfeiter, the worker in metal becomes a smith. Bearers of the family name "Smith" are perhaps more likely than others to have noted its antecedents.<sup>9</sup>

What Francis Watson chiefly manages to prove with these sentences is that Francis Watson has never finished reading *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*—any adolescent who has, even one who skipped ahead to the last page to find out how it ends, is more likely to have noted this point than all those "bear-

---

<sup>7</sup> As an index of how silly this debate has grown, Jenkins and Price, who were the first to drag Hunter's novel into this discussion, have each now proposed a new and different novel to explain Smith's motive for forgery. Jenkins now adduces *Anglo-Saxon Attitudes* by Angus Wilson, a novel about a forged archeological discovery by a writer famous in the 1950s for his open homosexuality, while Price invokes *The Word* by Irving Wallace, a novel about a Biblical forgery published the year before Smith's *Secret Gospel*.

<sup>8</sup> Watson 2010, 164.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 153.

ers of the family name ‘Smith’” whom he drags into this silliness. However Watson’s real motivations become clearer when we note his more recent response to Karen King and the “Gospel of Jesus’ Wife.” In declaring the papyrus fragment to be a forgery, Watson deliberately invokes Morton Smith and his supposed motivations:

The Jesus of the *Secret Gospel* likes to consort naked with young men at night, while seeming hostile to women. By contrast, the new gospel fragment has Jesus speak disconcertingly of “my wife”. Has this new heterosexual Jesus been created to complement Smith’s homosexual one?<sup>10</sup>

One might ask in reply: “Has Watson forgotten it is Saint Mark and not Morton Smith who records a naked young man in the Garden of Gethsemane on the night of Jesus’ arrest?”<sup>11</sup>

If the response of Watson and Jeffery and Carlson to the Mar Saba letter may indeed be deemed scholarship at all, it is necessary to historicize it. What has occasioned their renewal of interest in the text is not a sudden flurry of interest in Clement of Alexandria—it is the involvement of contemporary Christian believers in a contemporary debate about homosexuality. Carlson suggests that Morton Smith deliberately waited to publish until 1973 because it was “four years after Stonewall and at the beginning of the gay rights movement”<sup>12</sup> Jeffery—in a “Reply to Scott G. Brown” that the *Review of Biblical Literature* declined to publish—resorts to an even more lurid style of praeteritio-cum-insinuation, informing his readers “I resisted the temptation to publish any of the jaw-dropping oral traditions I have heard about Smith, even though some (if accurate) would be quite revealing.”<sup>13</sup> The Mar Saba letter is accordingly read not only as a forgery, but one with a gay agenda: it is clear that, to them, the legendary libertine beliefs and sexual license of the Carpocratians are merely a stand-in for the threat posed to the sanctity of Mark’s Gospel by twenty-first century gay marriage. Yet we do not require the Mar Saba letter to discover a coincidence of riotous homosexual conduct and the Gospel of Mark. I have elsewhere commented on Ilaria Ramelli’s 2007 paper outlining significant textual and conceptual parallels between the Gospel of Mark and the *Satyricon* of

---

<sup>10</sup> Watson 2012.

<sup>11</sup> Mark 14:51–2.

<sup>12</sup> Carlson 2005, 95.

<sup>13</sup> Jeffery 2008. The simple word “rumors” would have sufficed here, without adjectival modification, but clearly Peter Jeffery is devoted to “tradition” and cannot resist the temptation of “jaw-dropping oral.”

Petronius.<sup>14</sup> Ramelli is not the first or only scholar to observe the coincidences, which include at least one actual phrase (“ampullam nardi”) in common between the Latin of the *Cena Trimalchionis* and that of the pre-Vulgate Bezae Codex.<sup>15</sup> Erwin Preuschen in 1902 had commented upon this in a more limited way, but Ramelli’s account declares the parallels are “impressive” and “the points of contact between the two texts are remarkable.”<sup>16</sup> They draw opposite conclusions: Preuschen suggests Saint Mark had read the *Satyricon*, while Ramelli suggests that Petronius had read the Gospels.

Why, then, does this established connection between sacred and profane not worry the scholars eager to defend Mark’s Gospel in the way the Mar Saba letter worries them? One might reply that it is impossible to believe in the *Satyricon* the way one believes in Mark’s Gospel. Yet a recently-published 17<sup>th</sup> century libertine notebook from the Netherlands, written mostly in Latin by an anonymous student on the far fringes of Spinoza’s philosophical circle, suggests this is untrue. The libertine opinions expressed by this author “would have imperiled him if his notebook had become public,” as its editors note, and was therefore intended to be secret.<sup>17</sup> The notebook’s libertine opinions rely on a distinction between “the learned”—those with whom these ideas can be safely discussed—and everyone else. The author somewhat implausibly ascribes to Spinoza the following prayer: “sentire cum doctis, loqui cum vulgo, mundus vult decipi, amen” (“think with the learned, speak with the people, the world wants to be deceived, amen”).<sup>18</sup> He also records the gnomic statement “dicunt docti quod Biblia intellegere non possis nisi ante Petronium legeris”—“Learned men say that you cannot understand the Bible unless you read Petronius first.”<sup>19</sup> If those learned men used Petronius to read Mark’s Gospel the way that Ramelli has done, then we need not blame Morton Smith if we find libertinism and homosexuality lurking near the text of Mark—it was there all along.

It is indeed possible to read Ramelli’s argument for a connection between Mark’s Gospel and the *Satyricon* of Petronius and wonder if she has not gone far enough. For example, Ramelli emphasizes the similarity between the Petronius’s tale of the Widow of Ephesus and the Gospel narrative of the resurrection of Christ. But it would bolster Ramelli’s argument on this point, perhaps, to adduce this passage from the fragmentary “Gospel of Peter” found in Upper Egypt in 1886–1887:

<sup>14</sup> Martínez 2012, 12f. on Ramelli 2007, 42.

<sup>15</sup> Preuschen 1902.

<sup>16</sup> Ramelli 2007, 42.

<sup>17</sup> Steenbakkens, Touber, and van de Ven 2012, 1.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 15. In fol. 13<sup>r</sup> (147).

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 9. In fol. 8<sup>v</sup> (97).

29. ἐφοβήθησαν οἱ πρεσβύτεροι καὶ ἦλθον πρὸς Πειλᾶτον δεόμενοι αὐτοῦ καὶ λέγοντες<sup>30</sup>. «Παράδος ἡμῖν στρατιώτας, ἵνα φυλάξωμεν τὸ μνήμα αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τρεῖς ἡμέρας], μήποτε ἐλθόντες οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ κλέψωσιν αὐτὸν καὶ ὑπολάβῃ ὁ λαὸς ὅτι ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀνέστη, καὶ ποιήσωσιν ἡμῖν κακά.» 31. Ὁ δὲ Πειλᾶτος παραδέδωκεν αὐτοῖς Πετρώνιον τὸν κεντυρίωνα μετὰ στρατιωτῶν φυλάσσειν τὸν τάφον. Καὶ σὺν τούτοις ἦλθον πρεσβύτεροι καὶ γραμματεῖς ἐπὶ τὸ μνήμα. 32. Καὶ κυλίσαντες λίθον μέγαν μετὰ τοῦ κεντυρίωνος καὶ τῶν στρατιωτῶν ὁμοῦ πάντες οἱ ὄντες ἐκεῖ ἔθηκαν ἐπὶ τῇ θύρᾳ τοῦ μνήματος. 33. Καὶ ἐπέχρισαν ἑπτὰ σφραγίδας, καὶ σκηνὴν ἐκεῖ πήξαντες ἐφύλαξαν.<sup>20</sup>

And the elders were afraid and came unto Pilate, entreating him and saying: Give us soldiers that they may watch his sepulchre for three days, lest his disciples come and steal him away and the people suppose that he is risen from the dead, and do us hurt. And Pilate gave them Petronius the centurion with soldiers to watch the sepulchre; and the elders and scribes came with them unto the tomb, and when they had rolled a great stone to keep out the centurion and the soldiers, then all that were there together set it upon the door of the tomb; and plastered thereon seven seals; and they pitched a tent there and kept watch. (Trans. M. R. James).<sup>21</sup>

If this fragmentary Gospel of Peter is indeed the same one Saint Hieronymus rejects as apocryphal in *De Viris Illustribus* 1, perhaps this hints at his reason.<sup>22</sup> The text of this Gospel seems to confirm the relationship between the narrative of Christ's crucifixion and *Satyricon* 111–112<sup>23</sup>. Not only do the Pharisees here

<sup>20</sup> Mara 2006. See also the older Swete 1893, 14–15.

<sup>21</sup> James 1924; Dekle 2011, 110.

<sup>22</sup> “Libri autem, e quibus unus Actorum eius inscribitur, alius Evangelii, tertius Praedicationis, quartus Apocalypseos, quintus Iudicii, inter apocryphas scripturas repudiantur.”— “On the other hand, the books, of which one is entitled his Acts, another his Gospel, a third his Preaching, a fourth his Revelation, a fifth his Judgment are rejected as apocryphal” (trans. E. C. Richardson).

<sup>23</sup> The only Gospel to mention a guard placed at the tomb is Matthew 27:62–66; there the Pharisees' demand is based on Christ's promise to rise again in three days. “Petronius” is also named as a disciple of Saint Paul in the *Acta ex Menaeis Graecis* for Saint Hermione of Ephesus, daughter of Saint Philip the Evangelist (Acts 21:8–9), martyred under Trajan and venerated on 4 September. Hermione in her martyrdom was comforted by a vision of Christ, in the form of Petronius, sitting on the throne of judgment. In the Latin of Matthäus Rader: “...Hermione, cum videret Christum pro tribunali, in habitu et forma Petronii residere, atque illam alloquentem et ad constantiam hortantem, verbera pro nihilo duxit.” See Stilingo et al. 1868, 185 F.

seem to have heard the tale of the Widow of Ephesus already, the Gospel even gives the name “Petronius” to the centurion who guards the tomb of Christ, and who later declares that surely this was the son of God.<sup>24</sup>

So why have scholars of the New Testament not rushed to disprove Ramelli’s work the way they have with Smith’s or King’s? Certainly Francis Watson, who sees the same “collage technique” in the Mar Saba letter, the Jesus’ wife fragment, and a novel illustration of the fictional “Shred of Nicodemus,” would not be fooled into taking Ramelli’s observations seriously, not even if someone showed him a papyrus fragment with this text:

ἦν ἀνακείμενος εἰς ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ κόλπῳ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, ὃν ἡγάπα ὁ Ἰησοῦς· ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ Μακάριος εἶ, Νεανίσκε, καὶ γὰρ δέ σοι λέγω, ἐγέρεθι. ὅτι σὺ εἶ Ἐνκ[...]

I hesitate to offer translation for what is obviously a forgery, but anyone familiar with the texts of John 13:23, Matthew 16:17–8, Luke 7:14 should be able to translate it themselves, save for the fragmentary final word. I will leave it to Watson whether that word should be reconstructed as Ἐνκολπίος, following the *Satyricon*, passim, perhaps even positing the Arbiter Elegantie as an addressee of Philippians 4:22, or simply Ἐνκόλπος, as per Martial, *Epigrammata* 1:31 and 5:48, mindful of the connection historically perceived between those two epigrams and 2 Timothy 4:21.

This may be a cheap fiction, but it is constructed from real texts. Francis Watson clearly believes in a Jesus who holds his disciple ἐν τῷ κόλπῳ but is neither “homosexual” nor “heterosexual.” Encolpius in the *Satyricon*, and the lover of Encolpos in Martial’s epigrams, are neither homosexual nor heterosex-

<sup>24</sup> The 1886–1887 discovery of this Gospel oddly coincides with the sustained comparison of Petronius and the New Testament by one well-known German philologist. Friedrich Nietzsche in *Der Antichrist* (1888) offers an extended contrast of Petronius with the Gospels: “Jedes Buch wird reinlich, wenn man eben das neue Testament gelesen hat: ich las, um ein Beispiel zu geben, mit Entzücken unmittelbar nach Paulus jenen anmuthigsten, übermüthigsten Spötter Petronius, von dem man sagen könnte, was Domenico Boccaccio über Cesare Borgia an den Herzog von Parma schrieb: ‘è tutto festo’—unsterblich gesund, unsterblich heiter und wohlgerathen...”, in Nietzsche 1969, 46. Similar observations linking the two texts are found throughout Nietzsche’s final 1887–1889 notebooks, e.g., autumn 1887: “Welch erquickten nach dem neuen Testament etwa den Petronius in die Hand zu nehmen! Wie ist man sofort wieder hergestellt! Wie fühlt man die Nähe der gesunden, übermüthigen, selbstgewissen und boshaften Geistigkeit! —und schließlich bleibt man vor der Frage stehn: “ist nicht der antike Schmutz noch mehr werth als diese ganze kleine anmaassliche Christen-Weisheit und –Muckerei?”, in Nietzsche 1970, 175–176.

ual—is that what Watson means? What then would be required to make such a scholar believe this fiction worth refuting at the strange and risible length he accords to refuting Morton Smith and Karen King?

## 3

It is possible to form beliefs about any text, of course. The difficulty is that once certain beliefs have been formed by one text, it is difficult to approach another without preconceptions that can be disastrous for scholarship. Morton Smith himself seems to have observed this principle at work in study of Biblical texts; he described himself as a foe of “pseudo-orthodoxy,” defined as “apologetic and anachronistic scholarship recruited for the defense of certain religious beliefs about the Bible.”<sup>25</sup> It is a certainty that if Morton Smith were alive, he would describe Francis Watson and Peter Jeffery as exemplars of this pseudo-orthodoxy, probably in terms as rude and sensationalistic as those which they employ to deride Smith. What any commentator on fakes and forgeries must confront is the status of texts as a focal point for matters of belief and conviction. Critics of fiction may have recourse to complain that a novel is not believable, or that it is all-too-believable (and thus not interesting enough as a work of art), but when people start using a text as the basis for belief, then the status of that text as fiction becomes difficult to recognize.

As a test case, I would like to examine a specific work of scholarship in literary studies, by a distinguished scholar who has added much to the literary study of forgery. This is Fiona Stafford of Oxford University, who has established herself in numerous publications as a specialist on James Macpherson, forger of the so-called “Ossian poems” that ignited a literary controversy in the eighteenth century regarding their authenticity. Stafford’s work on Macpherson’s forgeries is praised, and Stafford herself commended as a producer of “excellent bibliographies,” by no less an authority on both forgery and bibliography than Anthony Grafton himself.<sup>26</sup> Though little read today, the poems enjoyed a long and remarkable popularity—they were translated by Goethe and extolled by Napoleon (who named his godson, King Oscar I of Sweden, after Ossian’s son Oscar)—although scholars in the twenty-first century are more likely to agree with Samuel Johnson’s skeptical estimate: “a man might write such stuff for ever, if he would abandon his mind to it.” But even those classicists who have heard of the Ossian poems are probably unaware that they were

---

<sup>25</sup> Strousma 2008, 147.

<sup>26</sup> Grafton 1990, 136.



intended, in part, as a classical forgery. In the epic battles depicted in the poems, the Celtic chieftain Fingal's great enemy is "Caracul, the son of the *King of the World*," intended pretty transparently to be understood as the Roman emperor Caracalla, whose father Septimius Severus led an abortive invasion of Scotland in the early third century.<sup>27</sup> Macpherson was well-informed enough to know "Caracalla" (like "Caligula") was a nickname referring to an item of apparel, and that the word had a Gaulish origin, but he gilds the lily in offering a series of spurious "Galic" etymologies (where his spelling elides any difference between Roman Gaul and Scots Gaelic) for a word that has otherwise eluded linguists: "Carac'huil, *terrible eye*. Carac'healla, *terrible look*. Carac-challamh, *a sort of uppter garment*."<sup>28</sup>

Classical scholars are unlikely to be fooled by any of this: not long after the poems' publication, Macpherson's contemporary Edward Gibbon noted that

in the Caledonian war, the son of Severus was known only by the appellation of Antoninus, and it may seem strange that the Highland bard should describe him by a nickname, invented four years afterwards, scarcely used by the Romans till after the death of that emperor, and seldom employed by the most ancient historians.<sup>29</sup>

Yet Ossian finds a place in Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* anyway:

...if we could, with safety, indulge the pleasing supposition, that Fingal lived, and that Ossian sung, the striking contrast of the situation and manners of the contending nations might amuse a philosophic mind. The parallel would be little to the advantage of the more civilized people, if we compared the unrelenting revenge of Severus with the generous clemency of Fingal; the timid and brutal cruelty of Caracalla with the bravery, the tenderness, the elegant genius of Ossian...if, in a word, we contemplated the untutored Caledonians, glowing with the warm virtues of nature, and the degenerate Romans, polluted with the mean vices of wealth and slavery.<sup>30</sup>

Gibbon here approves the spirit of the forgery, without crediting its status as historical fact. Escapist fictions require a world worth escaping, after all; Gibbon

---

<sup>27</sup> Macpherson 1765, xi.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, xi.

<sup>29</sup> Gibbon 1879, 153.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 153–154.

finds little else that is “pleasing” or that “might amuse” in the grim Severan dynasty.

Fiona Stafford’s success in approaching the Ossian poems comes from her willingness to read the forgery as a work of cultural criticism—a reflection of Scottish nationalist sentiment in a transitional period during the eighteenth century. Gibbon reads them similarly, as cultural criticism of the Roman Empire in the early third century. The Ossian poems are undoubtedly forged, but they do seem to blur the line between art and criticism: indeed, this point seems to have been made by none other than Oscar Fingal O’Flaherty Wilde.<sup>31</sup> Wilde began a famous work of his own, one that blurred the same line between critic and artist, by invoking Macpherson:

...we had a long discussion about Macpherson, Ireland, and Chatterton, and that with regard to the last I insisted that his so-called forgeries were merely the result of an artistic desire for perfect representation; that we had no right to quarrel with an artist for the conditions under which he chooses to present his work; and that all Art being to a certain degree a mode of acting, an attempt to realise one's own personality on some imaginative plane out of reach of the trammelling accidents and limitations of real life, to censure an artist for a forgery was to confuse an ethical with an æsthetical problem.

Erskine, who was a good deal older than I was, and had been listening to me with the amused deference of a man of forty, suddenly put his hand upon my shoulder and said to me “What would you say about a young man who had a strange theory about a certain work of art, believed in his theory, and committed a forgery in order to prove it?”<sup>32</sup>

Wilde intuitively connects the connection between forgery and belief, one which seems to animate most discussions of Gospel forgeries as well. Yet Wilde is also our best guide in regarding creative and critical work as precisely similar; for him the forger is foremost in illustrating his dictum that “man is least himself when he talks in his own person. Give him a mask and he will tell you the truth.”<sup>33</sup> In regarding the Ossian poems as a work of criticism, Fiona Stafford follows

---

<sup>31</sup> Wilde—born 94 years after Macpherson first published *Fragments of Ancient Poetry*—indicates by his own names the extraordinary longevity of Ossian’s popularity.

<sup>32</sup> Wilde 1982, 152. An early (and shorter) version was published in Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine in July 1889 and in later was included in an enlarged edition of *Lord Arthur Savile’s crime: The portrait of Mr. W. H. and other stories*, Methuen 1908, *pace* Ellman 1982, 152 fn.

<sup>33</sup> Wilde 1982, 389.

Wilde's lead. But she is left with the question of why anyone believed in Ossian at all.

The useful conclusion that Stafford reaches is that Macpherson's real achievement was neither art nor criticism, but mythopoesis. This is the thesis of her 1994 study *The Last of the Race: The Growth of a Myth from Milton to Darwin*.<sup>34</sup> This longer work clearly emerges from Stafford's earlier study of the Ossianic poems, but approaches the question of what made people believe in their authenticity. Ossian's poems are presented as the work of the "last bard" in the Celtic tradition chanting a song about a vanished civilization and a lost language. Stafford then outlines the history of this sub-genre of literature and mythography, which presents the narrative told by the last surviving member of a race.

Stafford devotes a large portion of her introduction to defining the term that she uses in her subtitle: "myth." As she notes, "no other term seemed sufficiently fluid and all-encompassing" because in approaching "a cluster of contradictory ideas, with an implied narrative, both 'idea' and 'theme' seemed much too limited."<sup>35</sup> And thus Stafford argues that

in order to study a myth, it is necessary to examine its numerous representations in individual works of literature and to determine patterns and meanings common to each....To understand the modern myth of the last of the race, it is valuable to consider as many manifestations as possible, from such well-known examples as James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* or Edward Bulwer's *The Last of the Barons* to A.D. Crake's largely forgotten *The Last Abbot of Glastonbury* or the less obvious *Z for Zachariah* by Robert O'Brien.<sup>36</sup>

Ultimately Stafford argues that the myth of "the last of the race" must indeed be an authentic reflection of some sort of larger cultural trend, insofar as this is not a case of a single influential work giving rise to popular imitations: with the last of the race, Stafford notes,

no single text can be identified as the starting-point. The absence of such a fixed original nevertheless gives it more in common with traditional myths, whose origins are untraceable and whose meaning emerges only through the comparison of the numerous expressions. There is no definitive version or

---

<sup>34</sup> Stafford 1994, 4.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 5.

original text for the last-of-the-race myth, but some treatments have proved much more influential and interesting than others and it is these that form the substance of this study.<sup>37</sup>

While Ossian was an early and founding text in this sub-genre, the real vogue for using this myth in literary works occurred in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, eventually noting that “the year 1826 was something of an *annus mirabilis* for the last of the race” when she comes to her discussion of *The Last of the Mohicans* by James Fenimore Cooper.

I have offered this detailed account of Fiona Stafford’s work not for the long list of examples she offers to posit the existence of this myth, but rather for one significant omission. She devotes entire chapters to *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826), which dramatizes the plight of the last surviving member of a Native American tribe, and to *The Last Man* by Mary Shelley (1828), which dramatizes the situation of the last surviving human on a post-apocalyptic earth, yet ignores completely a work published in 1830, which—if included—would have wholly altered the significance and approach of her study. In light of the copious supporting materials that she adduces to her discussion of *The Last of the Mohicans*, Stafford is certainly aware of the relevance of dwindling Native American tribes to the mythography she examines. But she seems completely ignorant of the existence of a rather well-known book narrated by the last surviving member of a Native American tribe of great antiquity, the Nephites:

1. Behold I, Moroni, do finish the record of my father, Mormon. Behold, I have but few things to write, which things I have been commanded by my father.
2. And now it came to pass that after the great and tremendous battle at Cumorah, behold, the Nephites who had escaped into the country southward were hunted by the Lamanites, until they were all destroyed.
3. And my father also was killed by them, and I even remain alone to write the sad tale of the destruction of my people. But behold, they are gone, and I fulfil the commandment of my father. And whether they will slay me, I know not.
4. Therefore I will write and hide up the records in the earth; and whither I go it mattereth not.<sup>38</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>38</sup> *The Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2013), Mormon 8:1–4.

It is somewhat hard to believe that Stafford could publish a 326-page monograph on the myth of “the last of the race”—exemplified in poems and texts that purport to be narrated by the last surviving member of an extinct tribe or civilization—and include no references at all to *The Book of Mormon*. Stafford’s survey is doggedly exhaustive in the best Oxonian fashion; she surveys dozens of treatments of this myth, but astonishingly fails to mention the one version of the myth that has resulted in the reality of an established religion. What is equally astonishing, however, is that upon the publication of *The Last of the Race* twenty years ago, no reviewer noted this omission either. But perhaps this is no surprise: any scholar who does not believe *The Book of Mormon* is a sacred text is unlikely to have read it, and any scholar who believes it to be the word of God is unlikely to point out its resemblance to a genre of fiction whose popularity was at its height at the precise moment it was published.

Uncas the Mohican, Ossian son of Fingal, and Moroni the Nephite are each at the center of a particular type of literary myth—but one of those myths has become a reality, with temples and missionaries, while the others have not. Stafford’s single omission undermines the entire work, and raises the question of how she made the mistake. Perhaps Stafford did not read the 1990 study of forgery in which Anthony Grafton commended her for “excellent bibliographies”; there Grafton compares Macpherson’s forgeries to those of the Mormon Smith, noting “the same topoi of impressive books suddenly appearing have long outlasted their supposed Enlightenment origins, as the history of Mormonism shows.”<sup>39</sup> Perhaps Stafford is a believing Mormon, or perhaps deferential to Mormon sensitivities. (Surely she cannot claim lack of access to the text, as a simple phone call will ensure a copy is promptly delivered to your front door, free of charge.) Perhaps the moment that a myth passes out of the texts and into the reality of reverent faith, it eludes the notice even of the experts. Perhaps even the experts revere myth over reality: reality is sillier.

## 4

A work of popular fiction seems strangely to coincide with a newly-discovered Biblical manuscript, which may or may not be a forgery.

This one-sentence summary could be applied to *The Mystery of Mar Saba* and Morton Smith’s Mar Saba Letter. It could be applied to *The Da Vinci Code* and the “Gospel of Jesus’ Wife.” And it could be applied to *The Last of the Mohicans* and *The Book of Mormon*. The irony is that, of these three, the one “Bib-

---

<sup>39</sup> Grafton 1990, 58.

lical” manuscript most easily demonstrated by scholarship to be a forgery, *The Book of Mormon*, is the one that has the largest number of true believers—despite scholarly assurance that the name “Smith” is an automatic clue for “forgery.”<sup>40</sup> Meanwhile the scholars who debate whether the “Secret Gospel of Mark” and the “Gospel of Jesus’ Wife” are forgeries seem all too often to be arguing about something else entirely—not the evidence of the text, but the evidence of things not seen.

In expanding the subject of fakes and forgeries in classical literature to include more general questions about truth, lies, and fictiveness, we must necessarily raise the question of belief. What is forgery without it? How does it permit such different approaches to the same evidence? How would the pious Puritans who founded Harvard University react, if they were told that some four centuries later, a woman teaching at the Harvard Divinity School would unveil a Gospel claiming that Jesus had a wife? Perhaps they would express horrified disbelief. Or perhaps they would find sufficient explanation for the event, and confirmation for beliefs already devoutly held, once they had learned that, in 2015, the President of Harvard University is also a woman—a woman named Dr. Faust.

### References

- Bernhard, Andrew. (2007), *Other Early Christian Gospels: A Critical Edition of the Surviving Greek Manuscripts*. London: T&T Clark.
- The Book of Mormon*. (2013), Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
- Brannan, Rick. (2013), *Greek Apocryphal Gospels, Fragments and Agrapha*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.
- Brown, Scott G. (2005), *Mark’s Other Gospel: Rethinking Morton Smith’s Controversial Discovery*. Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
- Burke, Tony. (2013), *Ancient Gospel or Modern Forgery? The Secret Gospel of Mark in Debate*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books.
- Carlson, Stephen. (2005), *The Gospel Hoax: Morton Smith’s Invention of Secret Mark*. Waco: Baylor University Press.
- Dekle, George G. R. (2011), *The Case against Christ: A Critique of the Prosecution of Jesus*, Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Gibbon, Edward. (1879), *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Edited by H.H. Milman. Volume I. New York: Harper and Bros.

---

<sup>40</sup> Certainly in the case of “Jesus’ Wife,” the use of the Coptic singular noun rules out the possibility it was forged by Joseph Smith.

- Goodstein, Laurie. (2012), "A Faded Piece of Papyrus Refers to Jesus' Wife." *New York Times*, September 18, 2012. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/19/us/historian-says-piece-of-papyrus-refers-to-jesus-wife.html?pagewanted=all>.
- Goodstein, Laurie. (2014), "Papyrus Referring to Jesus' Wife is More Likely Ancient Than Fake, Scientists Say." *New York Times*, April 10, 2014. Retrieved from [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/10/science/scrap-of-papyrus-referring-to-jesus-wife-is-likely-to-be-ancient-scientists-say.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/10/science/scrap-of-papyrus-referring-to-jesus-wife-is-likely-to-be-ancient-scientists-say.html?_r=0).
- Grafton, Anthony. (1990), *Forgers and Critics: Creativity and Duplicity in Western Scholarship*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Harris, J. Rendel. (1891), *Codex Bezae: A Study of the So-Called Western Text of the New Testament*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- James, Montague Rhodes. (1924), *The Apocryphal New Testament*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Jeffery, Peter. (2007), *The Secret Gospel of Mark Unveiled. Imagined Rituals of Sex, Death, and Madness in a Biblical Forgery*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Jeffery, Peter. (2008), "The Secret Gospel of Mark Unveiled: Reply to Scott G. Brown." Retrieved from <http://music2.princeton.edu/jeffery/Review%20of%20Biblical%20Literature-Jeffery%20reply%20to%20Brown.pdf>.
- Jenkins, Philip. (2001), *Hidden Gospels: How the Search for Jesus Lost Its Way*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Jenkins, Philip. (2014), "Alexandrian Attitudes A new source for the "Secret Gospel of Mark"." *Books and Culture*, May-June 2014: 8–9. Retrieved from <http://www.booksandculture.com/articles/2014/mayjun/alexandrian-attitudes.html>.
- King, Karen. (2003), *The Gospel of Mary of Magdala: Jesus and the First Woman Apostle*. Santa Rosa, CA: Polebridge Press.
- Knox, Sanka. (1960), "A New Gospel Ascribed to Mark: Copy of Greek Letter Says Saint Kept 'Mysteries' Out," *New York Times* Dec. 30: 1.
- Macpherson, James. (1765), *The Works of Ossian, the Son of Fingal. Translated from the Galic Language by James Macpherson*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. London: Becket and Dehondt.
- Mara, Maria Grazia. (2006), *Évangile de Pierre*, (réimpr. de la 1<sup>re</sup> éd. rev. et corr., 1973). Sources chrétiennes 201. Paris: Cerf.
- Martínez, Javier. (2012), "Prefacio / Foreword." In *Mundus vult decipi: Estudios interdisciplinarios sobre falsificación textual y literaria*, edited by Javier Martínez, Madrid: Ediciones Clásicas, 9–16.
- Martínez, Javier. (2014), "Foreword." In *Fakes and Forgers of Classical Literature · Ergo decipiatur!*, edited by Javier Martínez, Leiden: Brill, vii–xiii.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. (1969), *Der Antichrist. Ecce homo. Dionysos-Dithyramben. Nietzsche contra Wagner*. Edited by Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari. Berlin and New York: de Gruyter.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. (1970), *Nachgelassene Fragmente Herbst 1887 bis März 1888*. Edited by Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari. Berlin and New York: de Gruyter.
- Preuschen, Erwin. (1902), "Die Salbung Jesu in Bethanien," *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der Älteren Kirche* 3: 252–256.
- Price, Robert M. (2004), "Second Thoughts on the Secret Gospel," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 14.1: 127–132.
- Ramelli, Ilaria. (2007), "The Ancient Novels and the New Testament: Possible Contacts," *Ancient Narrative* 5: 41–68.

- Richardson, Ernest Cushing. (1892), *From Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, Vol. 3. Edited by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co.
- Sabar, Ariel. (2012), "The Reaction to Karen King's Gospel Discovery." *Smithsonian Magazine*, November 2012. Retrieved from <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/update-the-reaction-to-karen-kings-gospel-discovery-84250942>.
- Stafford, Fiona. (1994), *The Last of the Race: The Growth of a Myth from Milton to Darwin*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Steenbakkens, Piet, Jetze Touber and Jeroen van de Ven. (2011), "A Clandestine Notebook (1678–79) on Spinoza, Beverland, Politics, the Bible and Sex: Utrecht UL, ms 1284," *Lias: Journal of Early Modern Intellectual Culture and its Sources* 38.2: 225–365.
- Steenbakkens, Piet, Jetze Touber and Jeroen van de Ven. (2012), "A Clandestine Notebook (1678–79) on Spinoza, Beverland, Politics, the Bible and Sex: Utrecht UL, ms 1284." Version of January 26, 2012. Retrieved from [https://www.academia.edu/5055013/A\\_Clandestine\\_Notebook\\_1678\\_1679\\_on\\_Spinoza\\_Beverland\\_Politics\\_the\\_Bible\\_and\\_Sex\\_Utrecht\\_UL\\_ms\\_1284](https://www.academia.edu/5055013/A_Clandestine_Notebook_1678_1679_on_Spinoza_Beverland_Politics_the_Bible_and_Sex_Utrecht_UL_ms_1284).
- Stiltingo, Joanne, Joanne Limpeno, Joanne Veldio P. M., and Constantino Suyskeno, eds. (1868), *Acta Sanctorum quotquot toto orbe coluntur, vel a catholicis scriptoribus celebrantur ex latinis & graecis aliarumque gentium monumentis. Septembris. Tomus II*. Edited by Joanne Stiltingo, Joanne Limpeno, Joanne Veldio P.M. and Constantino Suyskeno. New edition by Joanne Carnandet. Paris-Rome: Victor Palmé.
- Strousma, Guy. (2008), *Morton Smith and Gershom Scholem: Correspondence 1945–1982*. Leiden: Brill.
- Swete, Henry Barclay. (1893), *The Akhmîm Fragment of the Apocryphal Gospel of Saint Peter*. London: MacMillan.
- Wallace, Irving. (1972), *The Word*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Watson, Francis B. (2010), "Beyond Suspicion: On the Authorship of the Mar Saba Letter and the Secret Gospel of Mark," *JTS* 61: 128–170.
- Watson, Francis B. (2012), "The Gospel of Jesus' Wife: How a fake Gospel-Fragment was composed." 20 September, 2012. Retrieved from <https://www.dur.ac.uk/resources/theology.religion/GospelofJesusWife.pdf> in <https://www.dur.ac.uk/theology.religion/about/news/?itemno=15333>.
- Wilde, Oscar. (1982), "The Portrait of Mr. W.H." In *The Artist as Critic: The Critical Writings of Oscar Wilde*. Edited by Richard Ellmann. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Wilson, Angus. (1956), *Anglo-Saxon Attitudes*. London: Secker & Warburg.



# II

## Classical Works



# Remembering the Future, Predicting the Past: *Vaticinia ex eventu* in the Historiographic Traditions of the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East<sup>1</sup>

BRIAN R. DOAK  
George Fox University

## 1. Introduction

This essay is an attempt to explore some historiographic, religious, and literary implications pertaining to the use of *vaticinia ex eventu* (Latin “prophecies after the event”) as an element of some literature, of varying genres, in the ancient Near East. Although *ex eventu* predictions appear in the apocalyptic sections of the book of Daniel (chs. 7–12)—and it is the book of Daniel that most often receives attention with regard to *vaticinia ex eventu* in the Bible—interpreters have very rarely made a sophisticated or methodologically coherent effort to consider *ex eventu* phenomenon in other parts of the biblical corpus (although see now Neujahr 2012), and, to broaden the scale considerably, few have attempted to consider the use of *vaticinia ex eventu* as a widely-employed ancient Near Eastern religious and historiographic trope.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, the *ex eventu* phenomenon has implications not only for the biblical scholar, but also for Assyri-

---

<sup>1</sup> I first presented a version of this paper at the 2009 Society of Biblical Literature annual meeting in New Orleans, LA, and received helpful feedback in that forum—as well as from colleagues at Harvard University during my time as a doctoral student there (2006–2011) and from two current colleagues Paul Anderson and Roger Nam. Matthew Neujahr, whose work I interact with in this essay, also offered a series of incisive critiques and suggestions on an earlier draft of this paper, which helped clarify the argument.

<sup>2</sup> See some discussion in Goldstein 2002, 9–16 and 22–24, n. 22; Pfeifer 1988, 230–233. The pseudepigraphic and intertestamental literatures are replete with *ex eventu* elements; see Collins 1993, 11 and Aune 2003, 147–149.

ologists, as putative *vaticinia ex eventu* occur in a series of enigmatic and highly-debated Mesopotamian cuneiform documents.<sup>3</sup>

Simply defined, *vaticinia ex eventu* are statements cast as future tense “predictions” that are, in fact, composed at a historical time *after* the predicted events have actually occurred. This literary technique, whose religious purposes and social-psychological motivations remain obscure, was apparently widely known and used in the ancient Near East, from Egypt to Mesopotamia, as early as the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE, and post-event predictions have found a place in many of the world’s religious traditions well into the Common Era, even to the present day.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, some contemporary religious movements may require believers to reject the notion that *vaticinia ex eventu* appear at all in their sacred texts. In the field of biblical studies, the question of whether a prediction is “genuine” or not can provoke extreme reactions. For example, Waltke (2007, 9) states in his commentary on Micah that the appearance of *vaticinia ex eventu* in prophetic literature would mean, disastrously, that “the Holy Bible is stained with a serious moral stain of deception, at the worst, or of obfuscation, at the least.” Consider also the pronouncement regarding the authorship of Daniel (a book where issues of pseudonymity and *ex eventu* speech are fused) by the 19<sup>th</sup>-century scholar E. B. Pusey: “The book of Daniel is especially fitted to be a battle-ground between faith and unbelief. It admits no half-way measures. It is either Divine or an imposture....The writer, were he not Daniel, must have lied on a most frightful scale” (quoted in Collins 1993, 25–26).<sup>5</sup> Another scholar of a past generation, writing about post-event predictions and pseudonyms, entertains such possible motives for this type of writing as “the spur of emulation, the aspirations of an unrecognized artist, the artistic delight in deception for its own sake...[even] the sheer exhilaration and the spirit of mockery” (quoted in Stang 2008, 48). Indeed, anxiety regarding Daniel has appeared recently in the secondary literature—even from those who seem not to have any explicit theological agenda—thus demonstrating the cultural and religious baggage associated with

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., Schrader 1903, 392; Labat 1939, 297 n. 101; Gadd 1948, 68–71. More recent and thorough treatments include Grayson and Lambert 1964; Hallo 1996; Ellis 1989; Longman 1991, 131–212, 233–242; Neujahr 2012 and 2006; Biggs 1985.

<sup>4</sup> E.g., Cicero’s *De Republica* (Geiger 1984, 41); some Egyptian materials (Longman 1991, 185–166; Neujahr 2012, 223–227; Devauchelle 1994, 6–30); the Book of Mormon, 1 Nephi 13:12 (the putative reference to Christopher Columbus here seems to be an interpretive tradition, to be distinguished from the *ex eventu* literary phenomenon—though the author may indeed have composed the reference as an *ex eventu* remark); contemporary Hopi Indian prophecies (Grabbe 1945, 26–27); and other examples in Osswald 1963, 28–29.

<sup>5</sup> For conservative interpreters, pseudonymity is usually viewed with extreme suspicion; see, e.g., Baldwin 1978. See list of recent scholarship in Stang 2008, 47 n. 8.

the issues of religious prediction, pseudonyms, and *ex eventu* speech (see Lenzi 2009, 345, where Lenzi claims the secrecy motif in Dan. 12:9 is a “ploy to gain authority for the book”).

The field of Assyriology is not exempt from this anxiety, either, in the now voluminous debate over the putative *ex eventu* cuneiform texts. Several Assyriologists speak of *vaticinia ex eventu* as though they represent some kind of hoax or religious infraction, whose sole purpose is to perpetrate a kind of deceit upon unwary religious readers.<sup>6</sup> The literature in general is marbled with loaded phraseology to describe these texts, centering around words like “pretends,” “propaganda,” “trick,” and so on.<sup>7</sup> Perhaps the most widespread explanation for the appearance of *ex eventu* speech is that these authors used fake predictions to bolster the credibility of the *real* prophecies that sometimes seem to appear at the end of such documents—and we know the real predictions are real because in some instances they are unfulfilled, or display a wild-eyed optimism in general. Thus, it seems clear that much (though by no means all) of the previous scholarship on this topic is not able to discuss *vaticinia ex eventu* in a measured, sophisticated manner befitting proper historical or literary inquiry. In a groundbreaking and detailed new study, now the first monograph-length treatment of the *ex eventu* topic (*Predicting the Past in the Ancient Near East: Mantic Historiography in Ancient Mesopotamia, Judah, and the Mediterranean World* [2012]), Matthew Neujahr argues that the Mesopotamian, biblical, and post-biblical *ex eventu* writings share a concern to meld “mantic” elements with historiography. However, despite its many desiderata—which include important considerations of genre and historical setting for the Akkadian materials in particular—Neujahr’s book is surprisingly light on providing any kind of thick religious, literary, sociological, or psychological understanding of why authors chose to write in the *ex eventu* style. He offers only the simple observation that ancient *ex eventu* authors wanted to “advocate some vision of the undoing of the (recent or current) political status quo” (2012, 251) or assert divine control over

<sup>6</sup> See Goldstein 2002, 9, 37, 58 n. 55; Grayson and Lambert 1964, 9-10; Grayson 1989–1990, 204; 1990, 282; Ellis 1989, 156–157, 172, 176; Hunger and Kaufman 1975, 374–375; Kaufman 1973, 227; Longman 1991, 210–211; Neujahr 2005, 107; 2012, 27, 150, 253. For the “credibility” or “propaganda” interpretation in other contexts, see, e.g., Smith 1994, 390 and Alexander 1968, 1009. But cf. Biggs 1967, 117; Osswald 1963; van der Woude 1997, 63, 68.

<sup>7</sup> I do think it is important to distinguish the documents I am considering here from what might be considered “forgeries” of a different kind, such as the so-called “Cruciform Monument of Manishtushu” or the “Donation of Constantine”—though, admittedly, even these documents pose similar problems and deserve study in their own right. On Mesopotamian forgeries, see comments in Ellis 1989, 172–173 n. 212, and see the edition of Vala (2007), as well as the interpretive study of Fried (2007).

history generally (2012, 72). At points, Neujahr reverts to the language of “propaganda” (e.g., 2012, 27) and ancient hoodwinking, describing the *ex eventu* elements of Daniel and 1 Enoch as “mantic compositions that have consciously mined historiographic material to manufacture audience trust for the oracles contained in the individual works” (2012, 150). Authors were “striving for legitimacy” (2012, 253).

In what follows, I attempt to chart a sort of middle-way between the viewpoints outlined above, and offer suggestions toward a new way of approaching these strange and difficult texts. I would hasten to point out at the onset that I have no Ur-theory for the appearance *ex eventu* statements in every place where they appear; my primary goal is simply to suggest that there are productive ways of approaching these texts other than labeling them as “propaganda” or “forgeries,” and other than denying the presence of *ex eventu* speech altogether. Toward this end, I briefly explore *vaticinia ex eventu* in a broad range of materials, beginning with a treatment of the aforementioned Mesopotamian documents and moving on to some *ex eventu* statements in the Hebrew Bible. The range of documents considered here will come, of course, at the expense of specificity for any given text, and yet an examination of this type will allow us to reflect on the meaning of the *ex eventu* technique over a period of a thousand years in the ancient Near East. I conclude by offering an alternative suggestion regarding the role and meaning of the *ex eventu* tradition in the ancient Near East, a suggestion that strives toward understanding *vaticinia ex eventu* as theological and historiographic embodiments of a non-homogeneous, kairotic (event-oriented) understanding of time and interpretive authority.

## 2. *Vaticinia ex eventu in the Mesopotamian “Prophetic” Texts*

The place of the Mesopotamian *ex eventu* materials in a generic categorization is a matter of over a half-century of scholarly dispute; indeed, the bewildering variety of labels, such as “apocalyptic,” “prophecy,” and “literary predictive text,” to name the most prominent suggestions that are applied to these texts, accurately reflects the enigmatic and fragmentary nature of our documents.<sup>8</sup> The texts in

---

<sup>8</sup> See Neujahr 2012, 75–118 for the most recent and comprehensive review of labels. Güterbock (1934) placed these texts under the rubric of “*narû*-literature,” and Hallo (1966) was primarily responsible for the “apocalyptic” label (for the problem of defining “apocalyptic”; see Collins 1998, 22–23 and Webb 1990; Smith 1983; Hanson 1976). Ellis (1989, 148–156) proposes that we call the documents in question “literary predictive texts. On the category of “apocalypse” for these texts, see Hallo 1966; Lambert 1978; Heintz 1977; Kaufman 1973; Grayson 1989–1990; VanderKam 2000; Hanson 1971;

question are not enigmatic simply because, in some instances, up to half of the lines are missing completely or difficult to read, but also because what content is readable often defies the best attempts at interpretation by its sparseness and vagueness. Several texts are now typically considered in this discussion; a brief summary of each document and its contents will help orient our attempt to explain the meaning of *vaticinia ex eventu* in Mesopotamia and Israel.<sup>9</sup>

## 2.1 “The Marduk Text” and “The Šulgi Text”

In Grayson and Lambert’s important publication of “Akkadian Prophecies” in 1964, shorter versions of these first-person narratives were labeled “Text C” and “Text D,” respectively. A scribal note in the colophon connects the two documents with one another, and they are often considered together in scholarly analysis, though they must have originally functioned independently.<sup>10</sup> The dating of the Marduk text to the reign of Nebuchadnezzar I in the 12<sup>th</sup> century BCE is very solid (Van Seters 1997, 97; Roberts 2002, 83; Longman 199, 138; Borger 1971b, 17; Neujahr 2006, 44), and in several respects the document seems very susceptible to the interpretation of “propaganda” in favor of Nebuchadnezzar I. The story begins when Marduk, in the first person, declares to a host of other deities that he will be revealing his “secrets” (*pirsātī*) (I.5). As it turns out, one secret he has been keeping is that his previous excursion to Hatti—in the form of his abducted cult statue—turns out to have been *self-motivated*; as I:13 laconically states, “I commanded [that] I go to the land of Hatti,” and during the trip he helps to establish trade relations between Babylonia and the Hittites. The historical allusion here likely refers to events that transpired in the year 1595 BCE, when the Hittite Muršiliš and his army stole the god’s statue in a battle against Babylon. A Kassite king, Agum II, re-captured and restored the statue a short time later, and thus Agum II is apparently the king who “arose” and took Marduk back home in I.23.

We further find out that Marduk has been doing quite a bit of traveling, all via his cult statue. Although the section of text is missing where Marduk travels to Aššur—I.1’–17’ narrates the return—the text here is thought to reflect the abduction of the cult statue by Tukulti-Ninurta I in the latter half of the 13<sup>th</sup>

---

Clifford 2003; Wilson 1980, 119–123. Cf. Collins 1998, 26–29, and Neujahr 2012, 105–110.

<sup>9</sup> I have omitted some technical elements of the discussion here for purpose of brevity; those interested in greater detail for these materials should consult Neujahr 2012 and the other sources cited here.

<sup>10</sup> For these two texts, I refer to Borger 1971b and the translation in Longman 1991, 233–237; see also Grayson and Lambert 1964, 7–8.

century and its re-capture by Tukulti-Aššur. Moreover, the text is concerned to show that Marduk, and Marduk alone, controls his own divine wanderings. Marduk moves on to Elam (I.22'–23'), and this last journey, surrounded as it is with a heightened sense of Marduk's own volition, reflects a very present concern for the author. Indeed, the primary impetus behind the material here in the Marduk Text is clearly the crisis involving the kidnapping of Marduk from Babylon by the Elamites in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, a crisis resolved when Nebuchadnezzar I recaptured the statue (see Kurht 2006, 375–376; Brentjes 2000, 1013). Further reference to this context occurs in the final, long portion of the text (II.1'–III.24). We are now introduced to a king who is not a figure of the past, but rather of the supposed future; as II.19 begins, “A king of Babylon *will arise*...” (šār KĀ.DINGIR.RA<sup>ki</sup> E<sub>11</sub> [*illâm*]-*ma*). This heroic figure, Marduk informs his audience, will reverse the dystopian horror described earlier and renew Babylon and the Ekursagil temple; he will decimate Elam (V:1ff., III.21') and restore complete order and health to the land. Clearly, this king is none other than Nebuchadnezzar I.

As Goldstein (1998, 44–45; and others) correctly point out, however, determining just where a literary predictive text leaves the realm of *vaticinia ex eventu* and enters into actually speculating about future events is difficult business. Here I part ways with Roberts' and Longman's assertion that the material concerning what the “future” king will do is a genuine *ante eventu* prediction. Longman (1991, 141) assumes that the ending must be a “real” prediction, based on the pattern in other texts where a series of *ex eventu* predictions are followed by a genuine one. However, in this respect the Marduk Text does not even conform to the supposed pattern for the initial “predictions,” since the beginning of the text is clearly not cast in a future-tense, predictive tone—Marduk narrates what has happened *in the past*. Roberts (2002, 87) states that the “tone of the document” and “vague traditional *topoi*” in the text's second half militate against it being a *vaticinium ex eventu*, and he also claims that the concern for emphasizing “Marduk's control of history” in the first few paragraphs of text are the basis for the “an appeal to past history,” and hence the ending is a “genuine ‘prophecy of salvation’” (2002, 87–88). Against these points it might be argued that, although the *topoi* here are traditional, they are no less so than the descriptions in the (generally acknowledged) *ex eventu* sections of Text A or the Uruk and Dynastic Texts, and some of the “predictions” are actually quite specific (especially in II.19ff., 1'ff.). The main feature of the *ex eventu* paragraphs, mentioned several times, is that the king will destroy Elam and its cities, a feat for which Nebuchadnezzar I is well known. This does not preclude the possibility of



a true prediction, but it leaves us with no compelling reason to assume the ending must be a before-the-fact forecast.

The Šulgi Text was positioned after the Marduk Text in Mesopotamian scribal tradition, and it is possibly slightly older (see Van Seters 1997, 97). However, our ability to understand the historical context of the Šulgi Text is hampered by the fact that the document is very fragmentary (nearly half its lines are completely obliterated). The ending, which may or may not have contained *vaticinia ex eventu* (in line with other supposed texts of its type), is also missing. What can be read is enigmatic and fragmentary. The text begins by identifying its “author” as Šulgi, a historical Ur III king (c. 2094–2047 BCE) who ruled over an empire comprised of all the key cities of southern and northern Babylonia (see Klein 2000; Longman 1991, 142–145). Šulgi had apparently taken on the status of divinity somewhere near the middle of his reign, a move reflected in the Šulgi Text by the emphasis placed on Šulgi’s close relationship to various deities (I:1–7, II:1’–21’). The narration continues by making reference to what will happen to a certain *rubû* (“prince”—of Babylonia?) and *šarru* (“king”—of Elam?) (III:1’–25’), viz., that “the prince will experience trouble” (IV:4’) in the form of wars, poverty, familial discord, and general confusion. The problems continue until the sanctuaries at Girsu and Lagash are reconstructed, although it is not at all clear who will accomplish this, or whether the final legible column (V) is a *vaticinium ex eventu* or something else.

## 2.2 “Text A”

First published in 1929, Text A was uncovered in Aššur, apparently dating to the late Neo-Assyrian period.<sup>11</sup> The text contains a series of predictions beginning with the catchphrase *ellâ rubûm-ma X.MU.MEŠ šarrûta ippušûš* (“a prince will arise, and he will rule for X years”). The fate of the land—with only an implicit connection to the behavior of the *rubûm*?—vacillates between abundance and destruction, with some descriptions utilizing stock utopian and dystopian imagery (“There will be rains and floods. The people of the land will enjoy themselves”; “There will be confusion, disturbance, and disorder in the land”; as in Grayson and Lambert 1964, 14). The alternation between “good” and “bad” periods for the land does not seem to follow any particular scheme;<sup>12</sup> a brief summary offers the following order of states of affair (following the catchphrase): *good—bad—bad—bad—bad—good* (if the catchphrase is to be restored on 1<sup>st</sup> side, iii.1)—*bad—mixed* (good for the “poor” in the 2<sup>nd</sup> side, ii.15

<sup>11</sup> See Grayson and Lambert 1964, 12–16; Longman 1991, 152; Hallo 1966, 235–239.

<sup>12</sup> So also Biggs 1987, 2.

and also good for the “mother” in line 17, but bad for the rich and land in general).

Of course, the “good” portions of the description may be missing from the extant text, and, once restored, would have created a more balanced effect. As we have it things seem to have been mostly bad for the author of Text A. The identities of the kings who appear in this text have been a matter of contention, but it is basically agreed that the first ruler mentioned (who is really the third in the list, but is the first to appear in an unbroken section, 1<sup>st</sup> side, ii.2) is Marduk-nadin-aḥḫe (1099–1082 BCE), while the final group of four rulers dates to the post-Isin II period (after 1026 BCE), the last of which (Mar-biti-apla-usur) died in 979 BCE. If we assume that the text was composed after the reigns of these kings, and, if we bar some peculiarity of grammar, then the repeated catchphrase is constructed in each case as future-tense (durative) pronouncement of what is to come (*ellâ...ippuš*), and all of the statements in the text qualify as *vaticinia ex eventu*. Things *will* happen that have *already* happened in the historical time of the author as linearly conceived.

### 2.3 “The Uruk Text”

The Uruk Text contains a series of *ex eventu* predictions mostly centered on the city of Uruk (Hunger and Kaufman). The date of composition may have been as late as the Hellenistic (Seleucid, specifically) period (Lambert 1978, 10), although the origin of the document is at least post-Nebuchadnezzar II (605 BCE) and probably dates to the time of Darius I (521–486 BCE; Grayson 1975, 206; cf. Goldstein, 1988, 43–46; Beaulieu 1993, 41–52). The catchphrase of the Uruk Text is *arkīšu šarru illâm* (“after him [i.e., the previous ruler], a king will arise...”), and the narration offers a series of alternations between just and unjust rulers. Whether the text is solely born out of cultural or political frustrations, the tablet ends with a prediction of glory for Uruk, where the reign of the final king “will be established forever.”

### 2.4 “The Dynastic Text”

The dating of this document is difficult, as with all of the other texts under discussion, but Grayson (1975, 24–40), at least, gave the text a post-312 BCE (Seleucid) date based on the final set of predictions, which clearly concern Alexander the Great (and possibly his successors).<sup>13</sup> The *vaticinia ex eventu* begin with

<sup>13</sup> See Grayson 1989–1990, 210–211; Lambert 1978, 12; Tadmor 1981, 338–339; Longman 1991, 149; Neujahr 2005, 101–107.

events concerning the fall of Assyria in the late 7<sup>th</sup> century BCE (although this section is mostly broken), and moves on to describe the fall of Babylon (side II.1ff.) and the last few Achaemenid kings (V.2–23). It is thought, then, that the last few lines (VI.1–6) are genuine predictions, but the text is too broken to allow for any firm conclusions.

The Dynastic Text, like the Uruk Text, ends on a positive note (lines 20–23: “The people who had [experienced] misfortune [will enjoy] well-being. The mood of the land [will be a happy one]. Tax exemption [...]”! So Grayson 1989–1990, 216). This mood of optimism, in which, as Grayson (1989–1990, 211) claims, “an eschatological, almost messianic, view of the future is presented,” appears near the ending (in some form) in all of the texts we have been discussing, and seems to be a stock thematic feature of these types of materials (cf. Neujahr’s 2006 critique, 49–54] of the “messiah” terminology).

### 3. *Vaticinia ex eventu in the Hebrew Bible*

Having briefly reviewed the pertinent Mesopotamian materials, we now turn to the biblical corpus. Our three selected examples of biblical *vaticinia ex eventu* come in well known biblical stories; the meaning and purpose of the *ex eventu* element in each, however, is less obvious. By considering a selection from the Torah, the Deuteronomistic History (DtrH), and the book of Daniel, I hope to show the variety of contexts in which *vaticinia ex eventu* can function and highlight the overarching problem of how and why this technique is employed in each instance.

#### 3.1 *Genesis 15:13–4*

I begin my review of the biblical materials here with an unconventional example, but one that still participates in a type of *ex eventu* narrative mentality. In Genesis 15, YHWH appears to Abram (later called “Abraham”) in a vision, renewing the unfulfilled promise of a male heir. After Abram challenges YHWH on the point, YHWH promises the patriarch descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky (v. 5), and the deity proposes an elaborate covenant ritual to affirm the promise. At nightfall, the visionary experience begins, and in great darkness, YHWH speaks to Abram. Vv. 13–14 read as follows:

And he said to Abram: Surely know that your descendants will be strangers in a land not their own, and they will be enslaved and oppressed for four

hundred years. But I will execute judgment upon the nation that they serve, and afterward they will go out with a great amount of property.

YHWH here refers to the enslavement in Egypt, which will later result in the exodus under the leadership of Moses in Exodus 1–15. The author is not a putative figure from the past speaking in a first person voice (as is often the case in various apocalyptic texts with *ex eventu* elements), but rather the *vaticinium ex eventu* comes in the form of a narrative. Of course, the Exodus as such need not have occurred as a historical event, nor need a patriarch named Abraham need ever to have lived for the *ex eventu* speech to achieve an important function in the story. If one wanted to bring a sort of traditional historical chronology to bear on the problem, then it is enough to note that Abraham lives many hundreds of years before the enslavement in Egypt, but even in the most conservative rendering of the documentary hypothesis, the earliest passages (from J) cannot be dated earlier than the time of Solomon (see, e.g., von Rad 1972, 187; Gunkel 1997, 177; Clements 1967; Westermann 1995, 214). Barring the possibility, then, that we have here recorded Abram’s and YHWH’s *ipsissima verba*, the text as we now have it presents itself as a “prediction” by the deity describing the Egyptian enslavement. In fact, the author’s most transparent purpose seems to be described laconically in v. 16: the “iniquity of the Amorites,” i.e., the current inhabitants in the land during Abram’s time, is “not yet complete,” and thus Abram’s descendants cannot simply occupy the land immediately.

### 3.2 Two *Ex Eventu* Moments in the Deuteronomistic History (1 Kgs. 8:46–53, 13:1–6)

Even a cursory reading of Deuteronomy through 2 Kings reveals many potential *ex eventu* narrative moments; indeed, several of these texts form part of what Martin Noth (1957) had originally posited as didactic speeches inserted in the mouths of key figures to punctuate the broader theological messages (e.g., Deut. 28:58–68; 30:1–10; 1 Sam. 2:35).<sup>14</sup> Although space here does not permit a full or adequate exposition of the contexts and purposes of these two passages, I raise them briefly to demonstrate the presence of a *vaticinium ex eventu* in each instance.

<sup>14</sup> On 1 Sam. 2:35 specifically, see Brettler 1997, 610. Brettler’s study appropriately reminds us that these texts under question in the “Deuteronomistic History” are the product of intense and repeated redactional activity, a fact that I assume at least implicitly throughout my discussion here.

In 1 Kgs. 8:46–53, Solomon’s dedication prayer for the newly built Temple provides the scene for an *ex eventu* narrative moment. After several overtures regarding the Davidic covenant, Solomon turns to praying for various potential scenarios that may befall his audience. In vv. 46–47, the king lays out a particularly specific situation:

If they [the people] sin against you [YHWH]—for there is no one who has not sinned—and you are angry with them and you give them over to an enemy, and they take them captive to the land of the enemy, (whether) far or near, and if they turn their hearts in the land in which they have been taken captive, and they turn and plead for favor to you in the land of their captors, saying, “We have sinned, we have committed iniquity, we have been wicked!”...

If these conditions are met, Solomon goes on to pray, then YHWH should forgive the people and provide compassion in the land of their captivity. The reference to YHWH bringing the people out of Egypt in v. 53 may even hint at a return from exile. Commentators are predictably divided regarding the redactional history of the prayer, seeing in it some mixture of pre-exilic, exilic, and post-exilic elements (Knoppers 2000; Cogan 2001, 292–293; Gray 1970, 226; Sweeney 2007, 130 n. 116; Levenson 1981; 1975, 219–220, 232–233). Simply put, I side with the majority of commentators who see in this reference, and others like it (e.g., Deut. 28:58–68, 30:1–10), a clear post-586 BCE reference, and thus it seems clear that the narrator has Solomon predicting the destruction of the Temple, the exile, and possibly even the return. It would be difficult to understand how such a passage could function as “propaganda,” unless the desired goal is for an exilic community to believe they can be forgiven for their transgressions and returned home, though a “credibility” argument seems more plausible in terms of those who might question YHWH’s divine involvement in Israel’s history, i.e. the idea would be that YHWH has provided and affirmed a way, even in the distant past, for his rejected people to find restoration.

1 Kings 13 tells a rather discouraging story of prophetic inevitability and the harsh results of disobedience (by both king and prophet) (for redaction and sources here, see Sweeney 2007, 179–180). An unnamed prophet (*’iš ’elōhîm*) appears abruptly at the Bethel altar and confronts Jeroboam with a message of doom in 13:2:

Altar! O altar! Thus says YHWH: A son will be born to the house of David, Josiah by name. And upon you he will sacrifice the priests of the high places who offer incense upon you—and human bones will be burned upon you!

Unlike the ambiguous oracle in 2 Sam. 2:35, for example, here it is Josiah, named with deterministic specificity, who will enact YHWH's punishment. The ensuing story that occurs after this pronouncement at the beginning of ch. 13 is certainly odd—our unnamed prophet is later mauled by a lion because of a trick perpetrated by another, older prophet (see Mead 1999; van Winkle 1989). What is an audience—either ancient or modern—supposed to take away from this kind of tale?

Many commentators point to the inevitability of YHWH's prophetic word in DtrH as the driving concern here, and this certainly seems to be at least part of what is at stake (Mead 1999, 205). How does the invocation of Josiah's name in v. 2 accomplish these ends? Commentators have expanded relatively little energy in discussing the role of the prophet in mentioning Josiah's name here, or the underlying historical or theological assumptions of the authors in the story; the default assumption is simply that some member of the Josianic court overzealously inserted Josiah's name into an existing passage in order to aggrandize the king (Cross 1997, 279–280; Gray 1970, 326; Cogan 2001, 367; Driver 1896, lv–lxi). Others have emphasized the literary function of this passage within DtrH—it serves as a bridge linking 1 Kings and 2 Kings with one another, as the fulfillment of 1 Kgs. 13:2 finally occurs in 2 Kgs. 23:15–20 (Fretheim 1999, 78). Much could be said about this passage regarding the role of Josiah's reform and the Deuteronomistic rhetoric designed to highlight that reform (c. 622 BCE). Whatever the case may be, the “propaganda” or “credibility” argument fails to satisfactorily reckon with the complexity of these texts and the difficult questions about exactly who composed this material, for whom it was composed, and why it was composed. The assumption of patronage by Hezekiah and Josiah, respectively, for the authorship of at least two of the editions of the DtrH is only a *beginning point* for interpretation, lest one be content to settle for viewing the final shape of the work simply as an accident of history and awkward redaction.

### 3.3 Daniel 11:40–45: *The King of the North*

Finally, we arrive at the clearly apocalyptic use of *vaticinia ex eventu* in Daniel 7–12. The historical background of these chapters is well known (Hanson 1998; Hartman 1978, 287; Collins 1998, 377); the specificity with which the author spells out the various wars between the Ptolemies and the Seleucids in ch. 11

and other events, like the appearance of the “abominable desolation,” i.e., the Zeus statue in the temple (Dan. 11:31, 12:11), and various actions of Antiochus IV “Epiphanes” (who began ruling c. 175 BCE) requires an author living in this very narrow time period between the rise of Antiochus and 165 BCE. The *ex eventu* nature of the materials in the book of Daniel is clearly revealed by what occurs in Dan. 11:40–45. Here, the author predicts that the “king of the north” will invade the “beautiful land” (v. 41) and enact stunning victories over Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, and the Egyptians. After hearing disturbing reports from the north and east, he will camp between “the (Mediterranean) sea” and the “holy mountain,” i.e., Zion, where he will meet his end. The author here is attempting a “genuine” prediction, it is almost universally agreed, in that he is living in a time before the death of Antiochus, looking forward to the hated king’s demise (Neujahr 2012, 131–134). As many have ably noted, the events described in vv. 40–45 are intentionally vague and turn out to be historically inaccurate; Antiochus died in Persia (according to Polybius), not in Israel (as Daniel predicts; see Collins 1993, 385).

Much has already been written regarding the various historical allusions and numerical puzzles presented to us in the book of Daniel. Here, our task has been to ask broader questions regarding the purpose of the *ex eventu* technique. Regarding Daniel, the question may be posed bluntly: What did these authors think they were doing in attributing this material to the shadowy “Daniel” as an author? Of course, *they themselves* knew that they were not living in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE, and members of their inner circle of “wise” apocalyptic tradents (the *maškîlîm* of Dan. 11:35, 12:3,10) would have also surely known that the authors of the book were *people that they knew*, not some figure from the distant past. To put the issue more starkly: Is the book of Daniel really, in Pusey’s words (cited above) a lie “on a most frightful scale”? And, by extension, are the authors of Genesis 15, 1 Kings 8 and 13, and the various Mesopotamian texts discussed above all liars as well? Admittedly, the question seems quaint after hundreds of years of critical scholarship; but the issue is, as I hope to show in what follows, not simply coffee-talk for confessionalists, fit to be answered solely on the terms of faith or non-faith in some naïve conception of biblical historicity—rather, it is a question of the history of religious practice in the ancient Near East and of the sociology and psychology of those who first composed and read the *vaticinia ex eventu*.

#### 4. A Model: *Kairotic Knots and Simultaneity*

We have now examined, in brief, several different kinds of passages, dated to different time periods and from different geographic locales. The discontinuities between these passages and their respective contexts are obvious, and one may rightly wonder if the *ex eventu* prophetic technique that appears in each of the cited texts can have any common religious or historiographic goals. At this point I would like to suggest a model—if indeed it can even be considered as such—that could help give some insight into *vaticinia ex eventu* in the ancient Near East. This insight can help us go beyond the simplistic practice of overlooking the *ex eventu* phenomenon as a base “rhetorical” technique or propaganda meant only to legitimize the message of a passage, or even as an insertion meant to simply bolster the credibility of the “real” predictions that come after the *vaticinia ex eventu* (as in Daniel or the Mesopotamian texts).

In discussing the development and character of the modern secular age in the West, several recent cultural theorists have highlighted a major rupture in the view of time, a rupture that stands at the breaking point between traditional societies living in “enchanted” worlds and the cultures of modernity. Most of us have, no doubt, become quite used to what Walter Benjamin and others have called the “homogeneous, empty time” of modernity that we have forgotten that the rendering of time in pre-modern societies includes disruptive moments wherein events are rearranged out of their linear order and imagined *kairotically*, i.e., as events that are connected to one another in terms of events that represent moments of special time (see Benjamin 1973, 263; Taylor 2007, 54–59, 96, 129, 194–195, 208–209, 264, 798 n. 45; Eliade 1996, 388–409; 1991, 49–92; and various essays in Westphal and Levenson 1993). The “normal” flow of time encounters “kairotic knots,” in Charles Taylor’s terminology, “moments whose nature and placing calls for reversal, followed by others demanding rededication, and others still which approach Parousia” (2007, 54). This altered understanding of time as it happens, gives us our modern word “secular,” which comes from the Latin *saeculum*, meaning a century or age. Those who live in the *saeculum* are committed to “ordinary,” homogeneous, linear time, as opposed to those who live in a different order (e.g., a monastic community; Taylor 1997, 55). Higher times “gather and re-order secular time,” so that, for example, “Good Friday 1998 is closer in a way to the original day of the Crucifixion than mid-summer’s day 1997. Once events are situated in relation to more than one kind of time, the issue of time-placing becomes quite transformed” (Taylor 1997, 55).



In Benedict Anderson's landmark study of nationalism, *Imagined Communities* (1983), the role of a group's conception of time also has an important place in understanding that group's identity in the transition from religious to secular state. For Anderson, "the idea of a sociological organism moving calendrically through homogenous, empty time is a precise analogue of the idea of the nation, which also is conceived as a solid community moving steadily down (or up) history" (1983, 24). Anderson spells out the thought process behind something like Taylor's kairotic simultaneity by way of Erich Auerbach's famous book on literary representation (1957, 64; discussed in Anderson 2006, 23–24):

If an occurrence like the sacrifice of Isaac is interpreted as prefiguring the sacrifice of Christ, so that in the former the latter is at it were announced and promised and the latter "fulfills"...the former, then a connection is established between two events which are linked neither temporally nor causally—a connection which it is impossible to establish by reason in the horizontal dimension...It can be established only if both occurrences are vertically linked to Divine Providence, which alone is able to devise such a plan of history and supply the key to its understanding...the here and now is no longer a mere link in an earthly chain of events, it is *simultaneously* something which has always been, and will be fulfilled in the future; and strictly, in the eyes of God, it is something eternal, something omnitemporal, something already consummated in the realm of fragmentary earthly event.

Walter Benjamin also broached the topic of time and its perception as homogenous over against its non-homogeneity at the end of his famous "Theses on the Philosophy of History" (first published in 1939). "History," Benjamin claimed, "is the subject of a structure whose site is not homogeneous, empty time, but time filled by the presence of the now [*Jetztzeit*, i.e., the mystical *nunc stans*, the eternal now]" (1969, 261). Benjamin's attack on historicism vis-à-vis historical materialism culminates with the following statement, which, I would contend, takes us closer to the views of pre-modern religious authors regarding the view of time and history within that time (1969, 263):

Historicism contents itself with establishing a causal connection between various moments in history. But no fact that is a cause is for that very reason historical. It became historical posthumously, as it were, through events that may be separated from it by thousands of years. A historian who takes this as his point of departure stops telling the sequence of events like the beads of a rosary. Instead, he grasps the constellation which his own era has

formed with a definite earlier one. Thus he establishes a conception of the present as the ‘time of the now’ which is shot through with chips of Messianic time.

In Benjamin’s “Messianic” view, Anderson comments, “the word ‘meanwhile’ cannot be of real significance,” since events occur with a kind of heavenly simultaneity; the Messiah might enter at any moment, as Benjamin claimed, and thus the future, as well as the past, is drawn into simultaneous, non-homogenous time (Anderson 2006, 24; Benjamin 1969, 264).

We may note, however, two types of simultaneity: first, there is the simultaneity adduced by Auerbach, wherein events are simultaneous because of their position in God’s eternity, or, in a related way, because two events share essential meanings or features. Second, simultaneity can also describe the situation within homogeneous, secular time, marked by “temporal coincidence”; a member of the modern nation-state does not know what their fellow millions of citizens are doing at any one moment, but there is a “complete confidence in their steady, anonymous, simultaneous activity” (Anderson 2006, 24, 26; see also Taylor 2007, 208–209). It is this former (pre-modern, pre-secular) understanding of simultaneity, particularly regarding the similarity of events and their perceived connection to one another that I find most compelling in terms of the *ex eventu* passages we have been considering here. Unlike Eliade (1996, 394–396), I see no reason to insist that such higher times be necessarily or primarily connected with ritual or to a mythical creation event, or that creation stories are the original source of such thinking. What seems important, rather, is the notion that events which are only distantly related and historically sequential in the *linear reckoning* can become, in an interpretive instant, joined inextricably to other significant moments with similar themes in constructed spaces of kairotic simultaneity.

The conception I am describing here is thus not to be confused with some vague idea of “cyclical time” (see the appropriate critique in Neujahr 2012, 72–73), but rather finds interpretive meaning in the past and fuses that past with the present and future.

Although postdiction has broad religious currency outside of materials traditionally considered “apocalyptic,” the prominent connection of *vaticinia ex eventu* with apocalyptic literature suggests that the *ex eventu* technique is, among other things, an expression of religious trauma and social upheaval (at least insofar as apocalyptic movements represent crisis and deprivation; Doak 2010; but cf. Cook 1995). Here, Benjamin (1973, 255) captures the historiographic spirit: “To articulate the past historically does not mean to recognize it

‘the way it really was’ (Ranke). It means to seize hold of a memory as it flashes up at a moment of danger.” The *ex eventu* technique addresses a world where, as Shakespeare’s tortured Hamlet puts it, “time is out of joint” (Taylor 2007, 58). The present events cannot stand on their own two legs, as it were, and thus the “future” (which is already in the past for the author of the *ex eventu* passage) is coupled together with past events, linking the meaning and progression of specific types of moments in the past, the present, and the future. This effect can also be achieved through pseudonymity, and indeed, an important analogy to the *ex eventu* phenomenon can be found in the use of pseudonyms as a religious and literary technique in antiquity.<sup>15</sup>

Drawing on the work of David S. Russell, Charles Stang investigates the reasons for pseudonymous writing in late antiquity and finds that

in this pseudonymous tradition...the authors believe that the distance between past and present can be collapsed such that the ancient authorities come to inhabit them and speak in their stead. On this construal, the pseudonymous author would come to understand himself as an ‘extension’ of the personality of the ancient authority. In other words, historical time would collapse into ‘contemporaneity’ and the voice of the ancient authority and the present author would merge in the very act of writing” (Stang 2009, 549).

Stang’s notion of “contemporaneity” in historical time and in the very act of writing itself is similar to the concept of kairoic simultaneity spelled out in brief above. Moreover, as Stang points out, in late antiquity there was apparently a strongly felt need in mystical communities to see oneself in ongoing continuity with the earlier, apostolic age. The further away in linear time such a community sees itself, the greater need there is to elaborate a closeness to meaningful events in the past. The tension created by physical and chronological distance from the exemplar period or individual is not at all ignored by the authors of *ex eventu* or pseudonymous texts; rather, it is this very tension that prompts the stretch toward avenues of meaning that cannot be thwarted by what is lost. Thus, I contend, more than seeing *vaticinia ex eventu* only as “propagandistic” or credibil-

---

<sup>15</sup> Here I am thinking of the fascinating recent work of Charles Stang on the mystical significance of pseudonymity in the writings of “Dionysius the Areopagite,” a pseudonymous author writing in the 5<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> centuries CE under the name of the apostle Paul’s 1<sup>st</sup>-century CE convert by the same name in Acts 17:34. See Stang 2009; 2008; and now 2012, to which I did not have access while composing this essay.

ity-oriented, the *ex eventu* technique is also literature of loss and of creative historiographic meaning-making.

### 5. *Redescribing the Biblical and Mesopotamian ex eventu Texts*

Having made these suggestions, I am now prepared to offer some avenues by which one might go about integrating the views of after the event prophecies outlined above into a reading of the biblical passages and one of the Mesopotamian texts summarized above. To begin with the Deuteronomistic History: it is time that readers recognize not only the prevalence but also the historiographic and theological importance given by the Deuteronomist(s) to the *ex eventu* prophetic scheme.<sup>16</sup> The first point to be made, then, is to assert the prominence of *vaticinia ex eventu* a key narrative element in the DtrH. The *ex eventu* technique is not a rare aberration in the biblical corpus, rearing its mysterious head here and there, but rather, it is found in a plethora of locations, and the centrality of the appearance of *ex eventu* type narration at pivotal moments in the DtrH suggests that *vaticinia ex eventu* should be taken seriously as a regular and central feature of the way the Deuteronomist recounts the past. Wherever the critical, hortatory addresses identified by Noth and others take the form not just of straight narration but a speech in the mouth of a character, we have what amounts to an *ex eventu* address. True, documents like Genesis and the book of Kings present a narrative reminiscence of a bygone era, whereas the Mesopotamian documents above (and, arguably, the oracles in Daniel 7–12) are clearly oracular. The presence of *ex eventu* elements even within the world of this narrative, though, can be compared with the spirit of historiographic meaning envisioned in the cuneiform texts.

What, then, are the historiographic implications of *vaticinia ex eventu* in the DtrH? One aspect of Noth's seminal (and hotly contested) theory of the Deuteronomist which invokes great dissention involves the underlying purpose behind the writing or redaction of the corpus. Why would anyone compile this monarchic history in the way that they did? Noth's (1957, 108–109) own idea was that the Deuteronomist was a kind of tortured, righteous soul, obsessed with theodicy, who sought to explain before his contemporaries the reasons for the destruc-

---

<sup>16</sup> By using the word "historiography," here and elsewhere, I do not at all mean to imply that the biblical or Mesopotamian authors of *ex eventu* texts wrote with a modern, critical understanding of "history" (see also Neujahr 2005, 106). Rather, I imply that an attempt at a recitation of the past can occur in many forms—and that there is no "altered mind state" involved in the writing of an *ex eventu* text vis-à-vis the "normal" material in the DtrH.

tion of both Israel and Judah: disobedience results in definitive, final, judgment. Von Rad, on the other hand, saw a hopeful counterbalance to the judgment in the form of a messianic theme in Jehoiachin's release (2 Kgs. 25:27–30), while others (found various layers of redactions (or two specific, uneasily combined layers in the case of Cross 1997) or prophetic substrata that could account for various individual themes, among which are both grace and judgment and everything in between (see summary and bibliography in McKenzie 1992; Knoppers and McConville 2000; Römer 2005).

At this point, I would like to take up the views of Hans Walter Wolff, who, I think, offers a promising solution for the purpose of the DtrH—one that I would like to endorse with some emendation, based on the presence and meaning of the *ex eventu* technique. Rather than seeing either unabated hope or dire pessimism in the Deuteronomist's vision, Wolff sees the DtrH constructing a view in which Israel hovers on the edge of a new epoch in history—the third in a series of cycles in the history of the nation—in which its audience is exhorted to *šûb*, “return, repent” (see Deut. 30:1–10; Judg. 2:11; 1 Samuel 12; 1 Kgs. 8:33–53; 2 Kings 17, 23:25). This return, in Wolff's view, (a) involves prayer (Judg. 2:16; 1 Sam. 12:19; 1 Kgs. 8:47), (b) includes a “listening to the voice of Yahweh, your god” (2 Kgs. 23:24–25, 17:13; 1 Sam. 7:3; Deut. 4:30, 30:2–10), (c) and is “non-cultic” in character. The Deuteronomist “considers the return to be less a human deed and more a psychological event...that will follow after [YHWH's] judgment” upon the people (Deut. 4:29–31, 30:1–10; compare with Hos. 2:9, 3:5, 5:15; Jer. 3:1–4:2; Wolff 1982, 98). Wolff (1982, 99), then, thinks the DtrH evinces an “open-ended” view of history, where “concretes and predictables would be absurd.” “Why does he [the Deuteronomist] keep his readers occupied with the ups and downs of events, concatenated through the centuries,” Wolff (1982, 87) asks, if indeed the purpose of the composition was merely to show that both the punishment and the future hope were foreordained?

The *ex eventu* passages, however, carry with them a specificity and determinism, and the view of history they would seem to promote *negates* the idea of an open-ended future; if the Man of God in 1 Kings 13 says Josiah *will* come, and indeed Josiah has already come, then Josiah will come. The cycle of apostasy and repentance in Judges and elsewhere that Wolff adduces toward his point is, in fact, a *very regular* type of cycle, without surprises or twist endings or the kind of “contingency” one would expect if Wolff's thesis were completely accurate—the falling away does indeed always occur, but so does the redemption, and it is the very determinism of the DtrH as a completed story of the past that, in the end, creates the awkward situation for Josiah in the text as we now have it (i.e. his most comprehensive and righteous of reforms cannot undo his ances-

tor's decisive evils). Therefore, the prominent place of the *ex eventu* speeches in DtrH suggests that history loops along in cycles of prosperity and decline that are fixed and basically under God's iron hand. By leaving the audience at the destruction of Jerusalem—and with the rising hint of redemption in the release of Jehoaichin at the end of Kings—the Israelites stand inextricably on the precipice of another loop, from which there is nowhere to go but up. All of this, then, suggests a view from the perspective of the author of the DtrH that is basically hopeful, and perhaps even expresses a kind of historiographic (or theological) esoterism (compare with von Rad 2001, 334, 343).

Turning to Genesis ch. 15, we have perhaps a special case where a kairotic understanding of the past may have especially influenced the author toward a certain kind of presentation.<sup>17</sup> In Genesis 15, and indeed throughout Genesis 12–15, Abraham's life is brought into kairotic simultaneity with the Exodus through various literary motifs and descriptions that are too frequent and specific to be coincidences: Abram is driven from the land down to Egypt because of famine (Gen. 12:10; see Genesis 42); there is a threat to kill the males, but to let the females live (Gen. 12:12; Exod. 1:16, 22); Pharaoh enslaves Sarai (Gen. 12:15; Exod. 1:11); Abram becomes prosperous (Gen. 12:16; see the midwives in Exod. 1:20–21); the deity plagues Pharaoh (Gen. 12:17; Exod. 7:8–12:51; note use of *nāga* in Gen. 12:17 and Exod. 1:11); Pharaoh sends them away (note the piel of *šālah* in Gen. 12:20, and then very prominently in Exod. 3:20, 4:23, 5:1, 2, 6:1, 7:14, 12:33–36, etc.); Abram leaves with increased property (Gen. 13:2; Exod. 3:21–22, 12:32–36); shortly after leaving Egypt, Abram fights a battle (Gen. 14; Exod. 13:18). In Exodus 6:3–4, just after Moses returns to Egypt from Midian, we have an invocation of the covenant promise to Abraham and the other patriarchs, and in Exodus 12:40–41 the author returns to the 400-year chronological scheme (stated as 430 years in Exodus) to mark the culmination of the vision in Genesis 15. These types of connections have been a stock part of Jewish interpretation for many years, and can be found in the traditional commentary of the 12<sup>th</sup>–13<sup>th</sup> centuries-CE Nachmanides (1971, 173). Thus, the story of Abraham and Exodus are linked to one another, so as to suggest that each story be read in light of the other. The story is paradigm, and *interpretations* of the imagined past are built into the telling of that past itself in the forms of episodic visions, speeches, “predictions,” and many other events. Scholars of the post-biblical period are very familiar with this technique, since it is the stuff out

---

<sup>17</sup> Here I do appeal to some notion of ancient “authorial intention,” though questions of ancient intention and modern interpretation are very different from one another and not contingent on each other.

of which a book like *Jubilees* is built (see the discussion of “exegetical motifs” in Kugel 1997, 33).

Israel’s fate in Egypt, then, is bound up in the story of the ancestors. The ancestor re-enacts the destiny of the people in retrospect; that is to say, the narrator invests his story with the entire meaning and destiny of the people in miniature. One finds a similar technique the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, where a “micro-narrative,” to borrow a term from Gregory Nagy’s influential work on the Homeric corpus, is employed (1999, xviii, 103–104; 1996, 22–23). In these micro-narratives, the entire story on the broadest level is writ small and represented in a self-contained narrative unit. Consider, for example, the Meleager micro-narrative told by Phoenix in the *Iliad* 9.520–602, wherein Phoenix attempts to persuade Achilles to return to battle. The story recounts how Meleager refuses to fight because of his own hurt pride (caused by the curses of his mother), and although he is begged by the elders of Aetolia (whose town is threatened), he does not. Several others implore him, to no avail, and it is only the final threat of the death of those closest to him—spoken by his own wife—that drives Meleager to battle, thus saving the Aetolians. In fact, this story is not only about Meleager, but about *Achilles*, whose own hurt pride and refusal to fight transparently parallels Meleager’s story. In essence, then, Phoenix is “prophesying” what it will take to get Achilles involved in the battle—the death of his nearest and dearest, Patroklos. The micro-narrative is not exactly a “prediction,” portentous though it may be, dropped into the linear course of the narrative’s history. Rather, the broader story of the *Iliad* is infused with a certain narrative and social logic that sees the fate of its heroes in terms of the entire history of heroic action; when we arrive at the “main event,” as it were, the entire story has already been told—Phoenix, the aged mystic, has already been there.

What I am suggesting here is that Abram and Sarai’s journey to Egypt in Genesis 12–13 functions as a micro-narrative in terms of the Exodus, and the presence of the *vaticinium ex eventu* in Genesis 15 cements this connection between patriarch and progeny. But it is not enough to simply assert that what we have here are recurring narrative patterns, as though the narrator’s aesthetic sensibilities demanded that he craft stories in a certain way. Rather, the connection is much deeper, and occurs at the level of a kind of hierophantic time, where the patriarch is present during the Exodus event—not because his body entered and exited with the mass of Hebrew slaves, but because he was *already there*.

If time and the presentation of “history” are conceived as multi-leveled in the manner I am trying to suggest here, then post event “predictions” are not really predictions at all—however they were understood by their author or in-

tended audience<sup>18</sup>—and thus there is no fraud to be perpetrated in a single-level world of time. Admittedly, for later audiences living in homogeneous, empty time, including those in the present day, one may feel forced to choose between viewing *vaticinia ex eventu* as either true and fulfilled predictions (which they are not) or as the product of propagandistic hoodwinking liars (which is simplistic and reductionistic in the extreme); it is unfortunate that highly conservative religious interpreters and their secular nemeses within the academy alike feel mostly constrained by these, and only these, options, a bifurcation that has prevented generations of readers from taking these texts seriously and searching for explanations that attempt to enter the world of religious discourse at the native level of the ancient authors.

Turning, finally, back to the Mesopotamian *ex eventu* texts, it should be noted that they, too, display kairotic knots where times of crisis are brought into interpretive relationship with one another. As one example, let us return to the so-called Dynastic Prophecy, one of the latest of the cuneiform documents—probably from the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE—utilizing the post-event prediction technique (Neujahr 2005; 2006, 47; Sherwin-White 1987; Ringgren 1983, 383; Geller 1990, 5–7; Grayson 1975, 28–36). First, I would like to make note of the text’s penultimate section, which, though severely damaged, contains several signs that are reminiscent of a so-called *Geheimwissen* colophon (or “secrecy label”; see Borger, 1971a; Hunger 1968, 13–14; Lenzi 2008, 170–219; 2009). Grayson’s reconstruction of lines 7–9 reads as follows (1975, 36–37):

|                                                           |                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| [... ...] <i>ilāni<sup>meš</sup> rabūti<sup>meš</sup></i> | [... a secret/taboo of] the great gods;                                              |
| [... ... <i>la mu-du</i> ]- <i>ú la tu-ka-lam</i>         | [You may show it to the initiated but to<br>The uninitiat]ed you must not show (it). |
| [... ... <i>b</i> ] <i>ēl mātāti</i> (kur.kur)            | [It is a secret/taboo of Marduk, lo]rd of<br>the lands.                              |

Admittedly, as Lenzi notes (2008, 202 n. 329), the formula here is either unique among the *Geheimwissen* colophons, or we simply have some other statement that is not a secrecy label. Nevertheless, the readings that do appear are tantalizing and may suggest some injunction that the tablet not be shown to unqualified individuals (note the use of the verb *kullumu*). If indeed these enigmatic phrases can be read as some form of a secrecy injunction—and it must remain only a tentative suggestion at this point—then the predictive list is not meant for every-

<sup>18</sup> I would like to hold onto the possibility here that these ancient authors may indeed have treasured understandings of time in the manner I describe above, different from modern “empty” notions of time, but ultimately this cannot be demonstrated.



one to see, but rather is a protected secret of a select few (compare with Daniel 12:4; but cf. Lenzi 2009 345–46). If the Dynastic Text is “propaganda,” for whom is it written? For other scribes who are already familiar with the *ex eventu* technique? If so, what is the point? And what is “propaganda,” exactly, anyway? If one defines the term very broadly, e.g., “a biased attempt to communicate information toward a political cause,” then such a massive swath of writing falls under the label “propaganda” so as to render the term nearly meaningless. In Neujahr’s view, for example, “propaganda” is used with this breadth and neutrality, but at other points, takes on a condescending tone and describes an author using a “trick,” meant to “seal[] the position of the propagandist with the approval of the gods”—with no historiographic function (Neujahr 2005, 107, 104 n. 23).

Along the lines of the readings offered above for the biblical text, a few comments may be made about the Dynastic Text. The author brings his current crisis into the perspective of past moments of significant upheaval: the famed fall of the Assyrian empire (i.7ff.), the rise and fall of the notorious “rebel prince” Nabonidus, who plots “evil against Akkad” (ii.16), the subsequent rise of Cyrus (ii.17) and Darius III (iii.6), and the victories of Alexander the Great (iii.9). The hoped-for victory of the Persian king over the Macedonians (and here I follow Neujahr’s reading in 2005, 103) and subsequent period of happiness and tax exemption in iii.13–17 indeed never occurred historically, allowing us to situate the author in a very specific historical position. What we have here, I propose, is a fascinating attempt at a kind of historiography, wherein the great battles of the past in which kings were deposed and empires uprooted are brought into kairotic simultaneity with the present moment of crisis. It is a highly selective, short, interpretive rendering of the past in which the author has included his own situation—certainly with his own hopes for victory and peace—as a culminating moment that can be resolved, if not through the esoteric act of composing the “history” itself, through the implicit appeal to the history of stock bad-guy characters (like Nabonidus) and empires rising and falling in patterned order. There are no messiahs, but there is an imposed order and a meaning to the past, which is recounted on the terms of that perceived meaning. This is historiography. At the very least, I would suggest that Assyriologists are doing a disservice to the religious and narrative complexity of their material by limiting themselves to the language of “propaganda” and “legitimization,” as though such terms are completely self-evident and as if their invocation sweepingly exhausts the range of motivations inherent in *ex eventu* writings.

## 6. Conclusions

In the minds of some, the use of *vaticinia ex eventu* comes off as a kind of pious fraud, a clever attempt to trick the masses, inspire confidence, and win adherents (cf. Plato in *The Republic* 414c). As even modern political contests show us, however, wealth and commercial airtime alone can never convey true “legitimacy” or “credibility” for a candidate. For every claim of pious fraud leveled against the *ex eventu* phenomenon, we must ask, *For whom are these inspiring “predictions” written?* Presumably the scribes who wrote the *ex eventu* statements were not in a trance state in which they actually believed they were living before the events in question. We have thus found reason to question the notion that all such predictions can only be considered as “lies” or as crass propaganda, and therefore we have sought to come up with explanations that take into account the aims of the authors in at least some of the texts discussed above. To be sure, there is a very real search for “credibility” and authority and a very poignant “rhetorical” effect at play in the *ex eventu* texts I have described—but it is a very specific kind of credibility, not rooted in a naïve prediction scheme, but rooted in the interpretive credibility that comes when one properly understands the meaning and movement of history. At any rate, the most important point I wish to stress is that every attempt should be made to understand the use of *vaticinia ex eventu* in a sophisticated and responsible manner, transcending the views of those who cannot, for various reasons, take *ex eventu* speech seriously.

Admittedly, the views I offer here could be understood or appropriated apologetically as a method of denying real historical problems or making specific theological claims; note, for example, already Augustine’s description of the Old Testament as “the shadow of the future,” i.e. events that are cast backward by the future, and dependent only upon a specific future (i.e. the future embodied in Christ and the New Testament; see Anderson 2006, 23 n. 32). However, I would hasten to point out that in no way is one personally or theologically constrained to endorse the views of kairotic time and of *vaticinia ex eventu* mentioned previously in order to entertain the notion that *the ancient authors themselves* of the texts cited in this study conceived of their efforts in this manner—and there is no need to even surmise that “average readers” (an almost incomprehensible phrase, given ancient literacy rates) understood such techniques. There is evidence to show that many ancient authors did think “historically” in a linear sense, but it would be a mistake to entirely conflate ancient historiographic conventions with those developed since the modern period.

But even Augustine’s notion of the future casting a shadow backward in time is not altogether foreign to an author like the 6<sup>th</sup>-century BCE Second Isai-

ah (Isaiah 40–55), who, when confronted with times out of joint, composed a series of “trial speeches” directed against foreign nations and their gods in Isaiah 41–44. As Peter Machinist (2003, 239–40) points out, Isaiah argues that only his god, YHWH, can describe what has happened in the past (“the former things” in 41:22 and 43:9), what is happening in the present-future (“the outcome,” “the things to come,” in 41:22), and what will happen in the future (“reveal what is to come afterward...,” 41:23; see comments on the translation of these phrases in Baltzer 2001, 118–120; Westermann 1995, 84–85; Blenkinsopp 2002, 203, 206). These abilities, to tell the past, present, and future, form a “litmus test” that will reveal the qualities of the “real” deity (Machinist 2003, 239); those who cannot measure up are declared to be worthless, a nothing (41:24, 29). This same challenge is taken up in 43:9, where again we see the use of a similar conceptual model, i.e., the true deity can tell what has happened in the *past*, as well as the *future*. Many have noticed the implicit tension between Second-Isaiah’s demand that his audience *forget* the past (43:18) and the constant appeals to the Exodus tradition in the very same breath (43:16–7)—presumably an element of that very past. Yet this suggests that for Second-Isaiah, the Exodus itself as a “historical” event is indeed part of the “former things” and thus must be forgotten, while the underlying pattern of which the Exodus itself is only one episode lies continually in the future for the audience—or so Second Isaiah would have them believe. Thus, the desired “future” is predicated not on a correct understanding of what has already taken place, which, in turn, must happen again typologically, but rather upon what is *continually already happening*. Babylon is brought into kairotic simultaneity with Egypt, the *Chaoskampf* at the Reed Sea (Exodus 15), with all of its national and cosmogonic implications, is waged continually on in the exilic generation crossing the Euphrates (Isa. 51:9–11), and the deserts of Sinai bloom again to life on the journey home. Such a process is like predicting the past as an oracular recitation, or remembering what has not yet happened, or will never happen, in the future.

### References

- Alexander, Paul J. (1968), “Medieval Apocalypses as Historical Sources,” *The American Historical Review* 73.4: 997–1018.
- Anderson, Benedict. (2006), *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Revised edition (first published in 1983). New York: Verso.
- Auerbach, Erich. (1957), *Mimesis. The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*. Translated by Willard Trask. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor.

- Aune, David E. (2003). "Enoch, First book of (Ethiopic Enoch)." In *The Westminster Dictionary of New Testament and Early Christian Literature and Rhetorics*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press. 147–49.
- Baldwin, Joyce G. (1978), "Is There Pseudonymity in the Old Testament?" *Themelios* 4.1: 6–12.
- Baltzer, Klaus. (2001), *Deutero-Isaiah. A Commentary to Isaiah 40–55*. Hermeneia. Trans. Margaret Kohl and ed. Peter Machinist. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- Beaulieu, Paul-Alain. (1993), "The Historical Background of the Uruk Prophecy." In *The Tablet and the Scroll: Near Eastern Studies in Honor of William W. Hallo*. Ed. Mark E. Cohen, Daniel C. Snell and David B. Weisberg. Bethesda, Md.: CDL Press, 41–42.
- Benjamin, Walter. (1969), *Illuminations*. Edited and with an introduction by Hannah Arendt. Translated by Harry Zohn. New York: Schocken Books.
- Biggs, Robert D. (1967), "More Babylonian 'Prophecies', *Iraq* 29: 117–132.
- (1985), "The Babylonian Prophecies and the Astrological Traditions of Mesopotamia," *JCS* 37: 86–90.
- (1987), "Babylonian Prophecies, Astrology, and a New Source for 'Prophecy Text B'." In *Language, Literature, and History: Philological and Historical Studies Presented to Erica Reiner*. AOS 67. Ed. F. Rochberg-Halton. New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1–14.
- Blenkinsopp, Joseph. (2002), *Isaiah 40–55*. AB. New York: Doubleday.
- Borger, Rykle. (1971a), "Geheimwissen." *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie*. Ed. Ernst Weidner and Wolfram von Soden. Vol. 3. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- (1971b), "Gott Marduk und Gott-König Shulgi als Propheten: Zwei Prophetische Texte," *Bibliotheca orientalis* 28: 3–24.
- Brentjes, Burchard. (2000), "The History of Elam and Achaemenid Persia: An Overview." In *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*. Vol. II. Ed. Jack Sasson. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1001–1021.
- Brettler, Marc. (1997), "The Composition of 1 Samuel 1–2," *JBL* 116.4: 601–612.
- Charles, R. H. (1929), *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*. With introduction, indexes, and a new English translation. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Charlesworth, James H. (1983), (ed.) *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. Volume 1. Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments. New York: Doubleday.
- Clements, R. E. (1967), *Abraham and David: Genesis XV and its Meaning for Israelite Tradition*. Studies in Biblical Theology, Second Series 5. London: SCM Press.
- Clifford, Richard J. (2003), "The Roots of Apocalypticism in Near Eastern Myth." In *The Continuum History of Apocalypticism*. Ed. Bernard J. McGinn, John J. Collins, and Stephen J. Stein. New York: Continuum, 3–29.
- Cogan, Mordechai. (2001), *1 Kings*. AB 10. New York: Doubleday.
- Collins, John J. (1993), *Daniel*. Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- (1979), "Introduction: Towards the Morphology of a Genre," *Semeia* 14: 1–19.
- (1998), *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans.
- Cook, Stephen L. (1995), *Prophecy & Apocalypticism: The Post-Exilic Social Setting*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- Cross, Frank M. (1997), *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel*. Ninth printing. First published in 1973. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

- Devauchelle, Didier. (1994), "Les prophéties en Egypte ancienne." In *Prophéties et oracles 2: en Egypte et en Grèce*. Supplément au Cahier Evangile 89. Ed. J. Asurmendi, D. Devauchelle, R. Lebrun, A. Motte, and C. Perrot. Paris: Cerf, 6–30.
- Doak, Brian R. "Legalists, Visionaries, and New Names: Sectarianism and the Search for Apocalyptic Origins in Isaiah 56–66," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 40.1 (2010): 9–26.
- Driver, S.R. (1896), *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Deuteronomy*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. ICC. Edinburgh: T&T Clark.
- Eliade, Mircea. (1991), *The Myth of the Eternal Return. Or, Cosmos and History*. Translated by Willard R. Trask. Bollingen Series XLVI. First published in as *Le Mythe de l'éternel retour: archetypes et répétition*, Librairie Gallimard, Paris, 1949. Princeton: Princeton University Press (9<sup>th</sup> printing).
- (1996), *Patterns in Comparative Religion*. Translated by Rosemary Sheed. First published in 1958, Sheed & Ward. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Ellis, Maria de Jong. (1989), "Observations on Mesopotamian Oracles and Prophetic Texts: Literary and Historiographic Considerations," *JCS* 41: 127–186.
- Fretheim, Terence E. (1999), *First and Second Kings*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Fried, Johannes. (2007), *Donation of Constantine and Constitutum Constantini: The Misinterpretation of a Fiction and Its Original Meaning*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Gadd, Cyril J. (1948), *Ideas of Divine Rule in the Ancient East*. Schweich Lectures. London: Published for the British Academy by Oxford University Press.
- Geiger, Joseph (1984), "Contemporary Politics in Cicero's De Republica," *Classical Philology* 79.1: 38–43.
- Geller, M.J. (1990), "Babylonian Astronomical Diaries and Corrections of Diodorus," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 53: 1–7.
- Glassner, Jean-Jacques. (2004), *Mesopotamian Chronicles*. SBLWAW 19. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.
- Goldstein, Jonathan A. (1988), "The Historical Setting of the Uruk Prophecy," *JNES* 47.1: 43–46.
- (2002), *Peoples of an Almighty God: Competing Religions in the Ancient World*. New York: Doubleday.
- Grabbe, Lester L. (1945), "Ancient Near Eastern Prophecy from an Anthropological Perspective." In *Prophecy in its Ancient Near Eastern Context: Mesopotamian, Biblical, and Arabian Perspectives*. Ed. Martti Nissinen. SBL Symposium Series 13. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 13–32.
- Gray, John. (1970), *I & II Kings. A Commentary*. Second edition. London: SCM Press.
- Grayson, A. Kirk. (1975), *Babylonian Historical-Literary Texts*. Toronto Semitic Texts and Studies 3. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- (1989–90), "The Babylonian Origin of Apocalyptic Literature," *Atti Dell 'Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti*. Tomo CXLVIII, 203–218.
- (1990), "Akkadian 'Apocalyptic' Literature." In *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. Vol I. Ed. D.N. Freedman. New York: Doubleday, 282.
- Grayson, A. Kirk. (1975), *Babylonian Historical-Literary Texts*. Toronto Semitic Texts and Studies. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Grayson, A. Kirk and W.G. Lambert. (1964), "Akkadian Prophecies," *JCS* 18.1: 7–30.
- Gressman, Hugo. (1926) (ed.), *Altorientalische Texte zum Alten Testament*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Berlin: de Gruyter.

- Gunkel, Hermann. (1997), *Genesis*. First published in German in 1901 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht). Translated by Mark E. Biddle, with a forward by E.W. Nicholson. Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press.
- Güterbock, Hans G. (1934), "Die historische Tradition und ihre literarische Gestaltung bei Babyloniern und Hethitern bis 1200," *ZA* 4: 1–91.
- Hallo, William. (1966), "Akkadian Apocalypses," *IEJ* 16: 231–242.
- Hanson, Paul D. (1971), "Jewish Apocalyptic Against its Near Eastern Environment," *Revue Biblique* 78: 31–58.
- (1976), "Apocalypticism." In *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, Supplementary Volume. Ed. Keith Crim, et al. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 28–34.
- (1979), *The Dawn of Apocalyptic: The Historical and Sociological Roots of Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology*. Revised Edition. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.
- (1998), "The Intertestamental Period and the Rise of Apocalyptic." In *The International Bible Commentary*. Ed. W.R. Farmer. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1206–1235.
- Hartman, Louis F. and Alexander A. Di Lella (1978), *The Book of Daniel*. AB 23. Garden City: Doubleday.
- Heintz, J.-G. (1977), "Note sur les origines de l'apocalyptique judaïque à la lumière des 'prophéties akkadiennes.'" In *l'apocalyptique*. Ed. F. Raphaël, et al. Paris: Paul Geuthner, 71–87.
- Hunger, Hermann. (1968), *Babylonische und assyrische Kolophone*. Kevelaer: Butzon und Bercker; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag des Erziehungsvereins.
- Hunger, Hermann, and Stephen A. Kaufman. (1975), "A New Akkadian Prophecy Text," *JAOS* 95.3: 371–375.
- Kaufman, Stephen A. (1973), "Prediction, Prophecy, and Apocalypse in the Light of New Akkadian Texts." In *Proceedings of the Sixth World Congress of Jewish Studies*. Ed. Avigdor Shinan. Vol. I. Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 221–228.
- Klein, Jacob. (2000), "Shulgi of Ur: King of a Neo-Sumerian Empire." In *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*. Vol. II. Ed. Jack Sasson. Peabody: Hendrickson, 843–857.
- Knoppers, Gary N., and J. Gordon McConville, (2000) (eds.), *Reconsidering Israel and Judah: Recent Studies on the Deuteronomistic History*. Sources for Biblical and Theological Study 8. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns.
- Kugel, James L. (1997), *The Bible as it Was*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Kuhrt, Amélie. (2006), *The Ancient Near East, c. 3000–330 BC*. Volume I. New York: Routledge.
- Labat, René. (1939), *Le Caractère religieux d la royauté assyro-babylonienne*. Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient.
- Lambert, W.G. (1970), "History and the Gods: A Review Article," *Orientalia* 39: 175–176.
- (1978), "The Background of Jewish Apocalyptic." The Ethel M. Wood Lecture delivered before the University of London on February 1977. London: The Athlone Press.
- Lenzi, Alan. (2008), *Secrecy and the Gods: Secret Knowledge in Ancient Mesopotamia and Biblical Israel*. State Archives of Assyria Studies XIX. Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project.
- (2009), "Secrecy, Textual Legitimation, and Intercultural Polemics in the Book of Daniel," *CBQ* 71: 330–348.
- Levenson, Jon D. (1975), "Who Inserted the Book of the Torah?" *Harvard Theological Review* 68.3/4: 203–33.

- (1981), "From Temple to Synagogue: 1 Kings 8." In *Traditions and Transformations: Turning Points in Biblical Faith*. Ed. B. Halpern and J. D. Levenson. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 143–166.
- Longman, Tremper III. (1991), *Fictional Akkadian Autobiography: A Generic and Comparative Study*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.
- Machinist, Peter. (2003), "Mesopotamian Imperialism and Israelite Religion: A Case Study from the Second Isaiah." In *Symbiosis, Symbolism, and the Power of the Past: Canaan, Ancient Israel, and Their Neighbors from the Late Bronze Age through Roman Palastina*. Ed. W.G. Dever and S. Gitin. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 237–264.
- (2003), "The Voice of the Historian in the Ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean World," *Interpretation* 57.2: 117–137.
- McKenzie, Steven L. (1992), "Deuteronomistic History." In *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. Vol. 2. Ed. David Noel Freedman. New York: Doubleday, 160–168.
- Mead, James K. (1999), "Kings and Prophets, Donkeys and Lions: Dramatic Shape and Deuteronomistic Rhetoric in 1 Kings XIII," *VT* 49.2: 191–205.
- Müller, Hans-Peter. "Zur Frage nach dem Ursprung der biblischen Eschatologie," *VT* 14.3 (1964): 276–293.
- Nachmanides (Ramban). (1971), *Commentary on the Torah, Genesis*. Translated by C. B. Chavel. New York: Shilo Publishing House.
- Nagy, Gregory. (1996), *Greek Mythology and Poetics*. Corrected paperback edition (first published in 1990). Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- (1999), *The Best of the Achaeans: Concepts of the Hero in Archaic Greek Poetry*. Revised edition (first published in 1979). Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Nissinen, Martti. (2003), "Neither Prophecies nor Apocalypses: The Akkadian Literary Predictive Texts." In *Knowing the End from the Beginning: The Prophetic, the Apocalyptic and their Relationships*. Ed. Lester L. Grabbe and Robert D. Haak. New York: T & T Clark International, 149–166.
- (2003), *Prophets and Prophecy in the ancient Near East*. With Contributions by C.L. Seow and Robert K. Ritner, ed. Peter Machinist. SBLWAW 12. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.
- Neujahr, Matthew. (2005), "When Darius Defeated Alexander: Composition and Redaction in the Dynastic Prophecy," *JNES* 64.2: 101–107.
- (2006), "Royal Ideology and Utopian Features in the Akkadian ex eventu Prophecies." In *Utopia and Dystopia in Prophetic Literature*. Ed. Ehud Ben Zvi. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 41–54.
- (2012), *Predicting the Past in the Ancient Near East: Mantic Historiography in Ancient Mesopotamia, Judah, and the Mediterranean World*. Brown Judaic Studies 354. Providence: Brown University.
- Noth, Martin. (1957), *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien I, Die sammelnden und bearbeitenden Geschichtswerke im Alten Testament*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.; first published in 1943. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag.
- Osswald, Eva. (1963), "Zum Problem der vaticinia ex eventu," *ZAW* 75: 27–44.
- Pfeifer, G. (1988), "Die Fremdvölkersprüche des Amos: spätere vaticinia ex eventu?" *VT* 38.2: 230–33.
- Porteous, Norman. (1965), *Daniel*. Second, revised edition. London: SCM Press.
- Ramban (Nahmanides). (1971), *Commentary on the Torah*. Vol. I, Genesis. Translated and annotated with index by Charles B. Chavel. New York: Shilo Publishing House.

- Ringgren, Helmer. (1983), "Akkadian Apocalypses." In *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World*. Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Apocalypticism. Uppsala, August 12–17, 1979. Ed. David Hellholm. Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 379–386.
- Roberts, J.J.M. (2002), "Nebuchadnezzar I's Elamite Crisis in Theological Perspective." In *The Bible and the Ancient Near East: Collected Essays*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 83–92.
- Römer, Thomas. (2005), *The So-Called Deuteronomistic History: A Sociological, Historical and Literary Introduction*. London: T&T Clark.
- Schrader, Eberhard. (1903), *Die Keilinschriften und das Alte Testament*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Berlin: Reuther & Reichard.
- Sherwin-White, Susan. (1987), "Seleucid Babylonia: A Case Study for the Installation and Development of Greek Rule." In *Hellenism in the East: The Interaction of Greek and Non-Greek Civilizations from Syria to Central Asia after Alexander*. Ed. A. Kuhrt and S. Sherwin-White. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1–31.
- Smith, Christopher R. (1994), "The Structure of the Book of Revelation in Light of Apocalyptic Literary Conventions," *Novum Testamentum* 36.4: 373–393.
- Smith, Morton. (1983), "On the History of ΑΠΟΚΑΛΥΠΤΩ and ΑΠΟΚΑΛΥΨΙΣ." In *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East*. Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Apocalypticism. Uppsala, August 12–17, 1979. Ed. David Hellholm. Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 9–20.
- Stang, Charles M. (2008), "'No Longer I': Paul, Dionysius the Areopagite, and the Apophasis of the Self." Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard Divinity School.
- (2009), "Dionysius, Paul and the Significance of the Pseudonym," *Modern Theology* 24.4: 541–555; (= "Dionysius, Paul and the Significance of the Pseudonym." In *Rethinking Dionysius the Areopagite*. Ed. Sarah Coakley and Charles M. Stang. Chichester, U.K.; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 11–25.)
- (2012), *Apophasis and Pseudonymity in Dionysius the Areopagite: "No Longer I."* Oxford Early Christian Studies. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sweeny, Marvin A. (2007), *I & II Kings*. OTL. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Tadmor, Hayim. (1981), "Addendum," *The American Journal of Philology* 102.3: 338–339.
- Talon, Philippe. (1994), "Les textes prophétiques du premier millénaire en Mésopotamie." In *Prophéties et oracles 1: dans le Proche-Orient ancien*. Supplément au Cahier Evangile 88. Ed. J. Asurmendi, J.-M. Durand, R. Lebrun, E. Puech, and P. Talon. Paris: Cerf, 97–125.
- Taylor, Charles. (2007), *A Secular Age*. Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Valla, Lorenzo. (2007), *On the Donation of Constantine*. Translated by G. W. Bowerstock. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- VanderKam, James C. (2000), "Prophecy and Apocalypics in the Ancient Near East." In *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*. Vol. III. Ed. Jack Sasson. Peabody: Hendrickson, 2083–2094.
- van der Woude, Adam S. (1997), "Prophetic Prediction, Political Prognostication, and Firm Belief: Reflections on Daniel 11:40–12:3." In *The Quest for Context & Meaning: Studies in Biblical Intertextuality in Honor of James A. Sanders*. Ed. C.A. Evans and S. Talmon. Leiden: Brill, 63–74.
- Van Seters, John. (1997), *In Search of History: Historiography in the Ancient World and the Origin of Biblical History*. Reprint of 1983 edition (Yale University Press). Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.



- van Winkle, D.W. (1989), "1 Kings XIII: True and False Prophecy," *VT* 39: 31–43.
- von Rad, Gerhard. (1972), *Genesis*. Revised edition. First published in German as *Das erste Buch Mose, Genesis* in 1972 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht). Translated by John H. Marks. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press.
- (2001), *Old Testament Theology*. Volume 1. The Theology of Israel's Historical Traditions. First published in German as *Theologie des Alten Testaments* in 1957 (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag). Translated by D.M.G. Stalker. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Waltke, Bruce K. (2007), *A Commentary on Micah*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans.
- Webb, Robert L. (1990), "'Apocalyptic': Observations on a Slippery Term," *JNES* 49: 115–126.
- Westermann, Claus. (1969), *Isaiah 40–66*. A Commentary. London: SCM Press.
- (1995), *Genesis 12–36*. First published in German in 1981 (Neukirchn-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag). Translated by John J. Scullion, S.J. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- Westphal, Jonathan, and Carl Levenson, (eds.). (1993), *Time*. Hackett Readings in Philosophy. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company.
- Wilson, Robert R. (1980), *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.
- Wolff, Hans Walter. (1982), "The Kerygma of the Deuteronomic Historical Work." Translated by Frederick C. Prussner. In *The Vitality of Old Testament Traditions*. By Walter Brueggemann and Hans Walter Wolff. Second Edition. First published in *ZAW* 73 (1961): 171–186, and reprinted in H.W. Wolff, *Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament* (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1964). Atlanta: John Knox Press.



# Impostors in Ancient Persia, Greece, and Rome

GAIUS C. STERN  
Berkeley University

*percontanti Tiberio quo modo Agrippa factus esset  
respondisse fertur “quo modo tu Caesar”*

And to Tiberius, asking him in what way he made himself into Agrippa,  
it is said he shot back “in the same way you made yourself a Caesar!”  
(The last words of the captured pretender Clemens, AD 17)

Just as in the modern world, where impostors have attempted to acquire fame, fortune, and the throne by passing themselves off as lost royalty such as Anastasia, Dmitri Ivanovitch (son of Ivan the Terrible), Louis XVII, or one of the princes in the Tower, several pretenders from the ancient world launched equally daring schemes to obtain power, wealth, and fame under the guise of an assumed royal identity. A few impostors even succeeded in ruling for a brief time, most notably the false Smerdis in Persia, Alexander Balas in Syria, and Helio-gabalus in Imperial Rome. These impostors of the ancient world had the same motives and ambitions as those from the Medieval and modern worlds, but their task was on some occasions easier due to the limits of technology, communication, and easy identification, which made detection of their pretense less easy. The success of an impostor invariably depended upon the backing of the elite, without which failure was inevitable, and their punishment once exposed or captured was typically especially harsh because the impostor had threatened the dynastic bloodline of the entire nation and therefore had to be punished as a public example.

Nearly a dozen impostors achieved some level of fame in the ancient world for their daring attempts to seize power. For the purposes of this study, usurpers and lesser members of the royal family, such as Gyges and Antiochus Hierax, are discounted. Our goal is to list some of the better-known impostors who made a bid for the throne and, where possible, analyze why they failed. As a disclaimer-

er, we must readily concede that some monarchs of the ancient world were such successful impostors that they succeeded and were accepted as the genuine article. This study examines impostors whose deception was uncovered or at least very widely suspected.

The second shah of the Persian Empire, Cambyses (r. 529–21), invaded Egypt to increase his glory. Subsequently, out of jealousy, he secretly executed his brother and heir Smerdis.<sup>1</sup> While he was still in Egypt, news came to him via a herald, that Smerdis had seized the throne and now was issuing orders as the shah of Persia in fulfillment of the very dream that led Cambyses to execute him. Enraged, Cambyses questioned Prexaspes, who had secretly killed Smerdis, but Prexaspes assured him that he had drowned Smerdis in the Persian Gulf. The man issuing the regal orders was surely a false-Smerdis, most likely one of the Magi (the brothers Patizeithes and Gautama or Sphendadates, the latter of whom was also called Smerdis). Although Cambyses set out against the impostor at once, he suffered a self-inflicted, mortal wound and died.<sup>2</sup> Thus the pretender reigned for seven months in 521 before he was discovered and overthrown by the conspiracy of Darius and Otanes.<sup>3</sup> His discovery was by no means easy, for he both bore a close resemblance to the real Smerdis, and he limited his exposure to both the public and the court to diminish any opportunity to expose him. Herodotus tells an entertaining story that his true identity was discovered by his wife/concubine Phaidime, daughter of Otranes, who was instructed by her father to feel for his ears while he was sleeping. Cyrus had cut off the ears of Gautama/Smerdis the Magus for some malfeasance, so if the shah lacked ears, he was in fact an impostor.<sup>4</sup> Aware of the great risk she was taking, Phaidime nevertheless felt for his ears once he was asleep, and discovering he had none, realized he was an impostor, so the story goes.<sup>5</sup>

The false-identity of the pretender has at times been challenged. One theory ran that he was not an impostor, but the genuine younger son of Cyrus. The ancient textual evidence, including the trilingual inscription of Darius at Behistun and Ktesias 8–15, names Gautama the Magus as the false Smerdis. Of

<sup>1</sup> Hdt. 3.30, 32, 61–65, 71, 75; Ctesias Persica frag. 118–19; Plut. *Mor.* 490A = “*Brotherly Love*” 18; Just. 1.9 says the Magus (the unnamed Patizeithes) killed Smerdis. See also Ilya Gershevitch, “The False Smerdis,” *Acta Antiqua* 27, (1979, published 1981), 337–51; Simonetta Schiena, “The False Smerdis: A Detective Story of Ancient Times: The Reconstruction by Ilya Gershevitch,” *East and West* 58 (2008), 87–106.

<sup>2</sup> Hdt. 3.64–66; Just. 1.9; *Behistun Inscription* section 11.

<sup>3</sup> Hdt. 3.66–79; Diod. Sic. 11.57.1, 16.47.2; Joseph. *Antiq.* 11.2.3; Polyae. *Strat.* 7.10.1, 7.11.2; Plut. *Mor.* 50F = “Flatterers” 4; Just. 1.9; *B.I.* section 13.

<sup>4</sup> According to Ctesias *frag.* 118, the punishment is whipping, not mutilation.

<sup>5</sup> Hdt. 3.68–69.

course, the official story need not necessarily be correct, but it is widely accepted because the conspirators would face far more difficulty trying to overthrow a genuine son of Cyrus than a pretender.<sup>6</sup> Another argument made him a Median, who briefly reasserted Median hegemony over the Persians. The Medes had dominated the Persians until 546, when Cyrus overthrew Astyages. Scholars generally take Magus to be a Persian caste, however when listing the *ethnes* or tribes of the Medes, Hdt. 1.101 specifically mentions the Magi as a Median tribe. If Smerdis was a Median Magus, the troublesome question would arise, why did Cambyses leave a non-Persian in charge of his affairs when he attacked Egypt? As Schiena said, the best answer is that he had to because the true Smerdis was unavailable (first he accompanied the invasion of Egypt, then he was murdered).<sup>7</sup> In any case, Gautama's motive was surely the power and wealth of the throne, whether or not religious zeal played an additional factor in his bid for power.

At very close to the same time, king Ariston (r. ca. 545–ca 515 BC) of the Eurypontid dynasty of Sparta died, leaving the throne to his only son, Demaratus. This king Ariston had formerly tricked his friend Agetus, son of Alcides, into exchanging presents and had insisted upon receiving the wife of his friend (the Spartans had no laws banning adultery to encourage the birthrate, and they were flexible about divorce and polyandry). When the son was born less than nine months later, Ariston initially expressed doubt about his parentage and swore an oath that “the boy cannot be mine.”<sup>8</sup> However, subsequently he changed his mind, and upon his death Demaratus succeeded without dispute. Many years later, Demaratus quarreled with the other king, Cleomenes I from the Agiad dynasty, over the Persian threat. Finding Demaratus impossible, Cleomenes hatched a scheme to disqualify him from the throne on the grounds that Demaratus was essentially a pretender because he was not the son of Ariston. With the cooperation of Demaratus's second cousin, Leotychidas, Cleomenes bribed the Oracle at Delphi to pronounce Demaratus the son of Agetus.<sup>9</sup> There-

---

<sup>6</sup> How and Wells, *A Commentary on Herodotus* I, appendix V is most helpful in summarizing and discrediting theories that suggest the false Smerdis was anything other than the Magus Gautama. A good comparison can be made to the overthrow of the legitimate king Richard II by Henry Bolingbrook in 1399. Although Henry was a member of the dynasty from a cadet branch, he had to face repeated attempts to oust him. Darius also was from a cadet branch of the dynasty, but after overthrowing Gautama, faced no substantial opposition, as he had replaced a usurper.

<sup>7</sup> Schiena 2008, 92.

<sup>8</sup> Hdt. 6.63; Paus. 3.4.3–4, 3.7.7–8.

<sup>9</sup> Hdt. 6.65; Paus. 3.4.3–5. Leotychidas had a double motive for helping Cleomenes. Demaratus had stolen his fiancée Percalus, much as Ariston had unscrupulously obtained the wife of Agetus; furthermore, he would become king.

upon, Demaratus was deposed as a usurper and replaced with his cousin, now Leotychidas II. Demaratus was given a minor office in the state without punishment for holding the throne, but later quit the country over the humiliation he endured from Leotychidas. At a later point, hounded out of Greece, Demaratus went to Persia and assisted Xerxes in the invasion of Greece in 480 BC, for which he was branded a traitor.<sup>10</sup> After the Persian wars, the bribery of the Oracle at Delphi was discovered and Demaratus was vindicated, but by this time he could not be restored to the throne (nor his sons) because of the help he had given Xerxes.<sup>11</sup>

A second episode of disputed paternity occurred in Sparta over a century later, after the conclusion of the Peloponnesian War. On his deathbed, Agis II (r. 427 – ca. 398) repeatedly insisted that the boy he had repudiated, Leotychidas, was truthfully his son and should succeed. His oaths were accepted while he was alive, but after his death, Agis's younger brother Agesilaus challenged Leotychidas's right to the throne on the grounds that he was not the son of Agis, but spurious. Xenophon records a conversation as if he was an eyewitness to the debate in which Leotychidas says "the law is that the kingdom goes to the son, not to the brother of the king," to which Agesilaus replies, "then it is I who should be king ... Because the man you call your father said you were not his son."<sup>12</sup> A false rumor circulated that Leotychidas was actually the son of Alcibiades the Athenian, who had seduced Queen Timaea, although the timing is wrong. Agesilaus exploited this rumor to win the throne. He also cited a prophecy that Sparta would suffer when a lame kingship occurred, arguing that accepting an outsider as king would be that lame kingship.<sup>13</sup> Ironically, Agesilaus walked with a limp due to a war wound, although this was regarded as a badge of honor in service of his country. The admiral Lysander, who had won the Peloponnesian War, backed Agesilaus, denouncing Leotychidas as a *nothos*, a man without a father. Agesilaus won the throne. Thus twice in Sparta in the same dynasty, the issue of paternity and a false heir decided the kingship against the claimant. Since Sparta had a special rule that all male citizens underwent the military training program called the *agoge* except the crown prince, one should think Demaratus' waiver from the *agoge*, and presumably Leotychidas's enrollment in it were decisive in determining their rights to the crown.

Sometime after the death of Alexander the Great, a boy named Heracles was "recognized" as Alexander's son by his mistress Barsine and hailed king by the

<sup>10</sup> Hdt. 6.67–70.

<sup>11</sup> Hdt. 6.72, 74, 84.

<sup>12</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 3.3.1–4, with less detail in *Ages.* 1.5; *Nep. Age.* 1.2–3; Paus. 3.8.7–10.

<sup>13</sup> Paus. 3.8.9; Plut. *Ages.* 3, *Lys.* 22, *Mor.* 399 B–C = *The Oracles at Delphi* 10.

general Polyperchon in 313.<sup>14</sup> However, Heracles's elevation proved his undoing, for a short time later, Antigonus made an appealing offer to Polyperchon, who at once executed Heracles. Whether Heracles was or was not Alexander's true son remains unproven, but the short term gain Polyperchon acquired for betraying him, sank him to the lowest regard among the Macedonians, and he was never again a serious contender for power.

A more successful impostor seized a portion of Alexander's empire in 151/0 BC, by passing himself off as the son of Antiochus IV Epiphanes and the younger brother of Antiochus V Eupator (164–162/1). Alexander Balas proved to be a major thorn for Demetrius I Soter (162/1–151/0), the legitimate Seleucid king and nephew of Antiochus IV.<sup>15</sup> Demetrius had unfortunately backed an unsuccessful candidate in Cappadocia named Orophernes, who blamed his defeat on Demetrius and created a disturbance against him. Foreign powers, seeing the weakness of Demetrius in the face of Orophernes's rebellion and eager to undermine the power of the Seleucid Empire, banded together to support a pretender against him in 153. That pretender, Alexander Balas gained support from Ariarathes V of Cappadocia, Attalus II of Pergamum, Ptolemy VI of Egypt, Jonathan the Hasmonean (Maccabeus), and most surprisingly, Rome.<sup>16</sup> Alexander Balas even obtained senatorial support against Demetrius, before starting a civil war against Demetrius. Fortunately for Alexander Balas, Demetrius died almost at once, and now unopposed, Alexander Balas became king of Syria.<sup>17</sup>

Alexander Balas's success was attributed to his remarkable resemblance to Antiochus IV, however, his backers knew he was an impostor. His marriage to Ptolemy VI's daughter Cleopatra Thea does not indicate any confidence in the impostor: his allies abandoned him as soon as the sons of Demetrius I invaded Syria in 145 to overthrow him. His international friends had supported him only to injure Demetrius I and to fragment the Seleucid Empire, not because they valued him as an ally. The successes of Demetrius II (r. 145–39, 129–25) inspired Jonathan to seize Joppa and Ascalon and Ptolemy to seize Coele-Syria. Cleopatra then abandoned Alexander Balas and returned to her father, who disa-

<sup>14</sup> Diod. Sic. 20.20.1–4, 20.28.2–3; Plut. *Eum.* 1.3, *Mor.* 530C–D = *Peri Dus.* 4.

<sup>15</sup> His name Balas may indicate as a title a devotion to the Phoenician god Baal, seen also in Hannibal.

<sup>16</sup> Polyb. 33.5.3, see also 33.15.1–2, 18.6–13; App. *Syr.* 67; Just. 35.1.6–9.

<sup>17</sup> Polyb. 33.15.1–2, 33.17–18; Diod. Sic. 31.32a; App. *Syr.* 67; Joseph. *AJ* 13.35–61, 116–119; Just. 35.1.5–11, 35.2.3–4; Strabo 13.4.2 = C 624; 1 *Macc.* 10.22–50, 11.14–19.

vowed her first marriage and married her off to Demetrius II.<sup>18</sup> Alexander Balas perished shortly after.

At just about the same time, several impostors appeared in Macedon, claiming the vacant throne, just as many pretenders claimed to be Louis XVII or Dmitri Ivanovitch. The most successful styled himself Philip VI, son of the last king of Macedon, Perseus.<sup>19</sup> This would make him a nephew of Demetrius I of the Seleucid Empire. His scheme was aided by the fact that he resembled Philip.<sup>20</sup> Ignored at first as harmless by the Romans, he defeated them twice as he raised a rebellion in Macedon and proclaimed himself king. In this case the success of the pretender, whose real name was Andriscus, depended upon popular support and suffered from the opposition of the local elite. Presently, Q. Caecilius Metellus (Macedonicus) defeated the impostor at Pydna (the site of Perseus' defeat in 167) and put down the last gasp of Macedonian monarchy.<sup>21</sup> The four Macedonian republics were incorporated as a Roman province, and the occupation began. Andriscus's initial success stemmed mostly from Macedonian nationalism and a widespread popular preference for a strong monarchy rather than the unsuccessful efforts of Rome at nation building by creating four weak republics. Even with support from the nobility, Andriscus could not have long held off Rome where Perseus had failed, but without it, his downfall was all the faster. A second pretender a few years later, called Pseudo-Alexander made an unsuccessful bid for power.<sup>22</sup> He was followed by a third pretender, called Pseudo-Perseus by Livy and Eutropius, who assembled an army of 17,000 men, but was defeated by L. Tremellius Scofra the quaestor.<sup>23</sup>

In this era, Ptolemaic Egypt suffered the uprisings of no such pretenders compared to Macedon or Syria because the dynasty was deeply entrenched with regularized succession and its members well known to the general population. Cadet members of the dynasty rose in rebellion, throwing the empire into several civil wars, but outsiders found it impossible to impersonate a member of the dynasty. The Roman Republic obviously encountered no such regal pretenders because the inherent plural rule of the system prevented any regal aspirant, although the issue of spurious children, shysters, and pretenders in other nations

<sup>18</sup> Apparently she did not rescue their son, Antiochus VI Epiphanes, who reigned briefly as a child-king, until his own sponsor executed him in 142, Joseph. *AJ* 13.187–212; 1 *Macc.* 12.39–53, 13.1–24.

<sup>19</sup> Polyb. 36.10.2; Liv. *Per.* 48–49; Diod. Sic. 31.40a, 32.15.1; Flor. 1.30.3–5; Eutrop. 4.13; Zonor. 9.28.

<sup>20</sup> Flor. 1.30.3.

<sup>21</sup> Polyb. 36.10, 17; Diod. Sic. 32.27.9 a–b, 15; Liv. *Per.* 49–50; Paus. 7.13.1.

<sup>22</sup> See note 56 below.

<sup>23</sup> Liv. *Per.* 53; Eutrop. 4.15.



arose as a literary topos. An early example of this occurs in the Plautus play *Amphitryon*, in which Jupiter disguises himself as Amphitryon in order to enjoy sexually Amphitryon's wife Alcmena.<sup>24</sup> To run interference for Jupiter's liaison, Mercury disguises himself as Sosia, the head slave. When the real Sosia arrives to do his master's bidding, he encounters Mercury, is driven mad to the point that he doubts his own identity in a very humorous exchange, and flees in confusion, convinced he is not Sosia. At the end of the play, Jupiter reveals all and announces the birth of Hercules, offering Amphitryon the chance to raise the hero as a sort of foster-father. Whereas in real life, most cuckolded fathers (outside of Sparta) would refuse, Amphitryon must accept. This time art does not imitate life. Plautus often engaged mistaken identity as a regular theme in other plays, but this play succeeds in making light of a matter that Greeks and Romans alike considered especially heinous, the violation of one's bloodline with the insertion of another's child who might wrongly acquire family property.<sup>25</sup>

Greed for the property of another looms large in five cases recorded by Valerius Maximus between 100 and 31 BC.<sup>26</sup> In 100 BC during a time of turmoil, an imposter named Lucius Equitius hoped to rise to power in alliance with Apuleius Saturninus by passing himself off as a son of Tiberius Gracchus, however, he was repudiated by Sempronia, the sister of the Gracchi. After the death of Cn. Asinius Dio in the time of the dictatorship of Sulla in 81–79, a charlatan broke into his house and drove out the son of Dio, claiming to be that son himself, on which see Mercury and Sosia above, except this time it was no comedy, but an added horror for the family. Thirty years later under the dictatorship of Julius Caesar, this impostor was punished for his crimes. Another man turned up in Rome, claiming to be the son of Sertorius the rebel leader in Spain, but Sertorius' widow refused to recognize him. Under Julius Caesar in Milan a woman appeared in court posing as the dead Rubria to press a claim for the property to which Rubria was heir, but her scam was foiled and she was denied a cent. After the death of Clodius and his only son (and thus step-son to Marc Antony) Trebellius Calchas pressed an unsuccessful claim for Clodius's property, claiming to be Clodius's son, and he had a considerable crowd of Clodius's old followers to back him (much as the most persuasive false-Anastasia raised supporters who recognized her as the lost princess).

In the turmoil that followed the assassination of Julius Caesar on the Ides of March 44 BC, a certain man of alleged low station saw the opportunity to seize

<sup>24</sup> In a similar way Uther Pendragon magically was altered to appear as Glamoris so that he could enjoy Ygraine in Arthurian legend.

<sup>25</sup> On fear of raising the children of another man, see for example Lys. *Kata Erat.* 33 ff.

<sup>26</sup> Val. Max 9.7.1–2, 9.15.3–5, 9.15 ext 1.

leadership and power in Rome by claiming to be the son (or grandson) of the great general Marius, who was an uncle by marriage of Julius. Livy calls him Chamates; Appian calls him Amatius, and Valerius Maximus calls him Herophilus.<sup>27</sup> According to Appian, this Amatius had already established himself as a smalltime rabble-rouser before the assassination of Julius. He used the opportunity to demonstrate great grief at the murder of his cousin and began to threaten the assassins. To the surprise of all, Mark Antony had him arrested and executed illegally without a trial in April. No sooner was this accomplished than the young Octavius, the true heir of Julius, arrived in Rome to demand the legacy left to him by his adoptive father. Antony had eliminated one rival to lead the Caesarean faction, only to have a more formidable one spring up.<sup>28</sup> Because Julius had adopted Octavius posthumously, which was not the standard procedure in Rome, there were some who refused to recognize the adoption and claimed that Octavius was essentially a pretender, making a false claim to the estate and the name of Caesar. In order to overcome this obstacle, Octavius had to undergo the process of adoption three times to establish his legitimacy. This is why he is addressed as Octavius by some correspondents of Cicero, well after the adoption.

An additional pretender waited in the wings, for he was still a child. Caesarion, the son of Cleopatra, was said also to be the son of Julius.<sup>29</sup> This is possible but could result only if Caesarion was conceived immediately after Julius and Cleopatra met. He was born on 23 June 47 BC, and his parents met after the murder of Pompey on 28 Sept. 48 BC, which occurred before Julius reached Egypt.<sup>30</sup> Later, Antony publicly recognized his paternity, however many other Romans denied it. If he were not the son of Julius, as claimed by Caesar Octavian, the logical candidate would be Ptolemy XIII Theos Philopator (r. Spr. 51 – 13 Jan. 47 BC), but since Ptolemy was barely 15 at the time of his death, and any sexual relationship between the two would have ended when he tried to depose her in Spr. 48, it seems almost certain that someone else was the father.

<sup>27</sup> Cic. *Ad Att.* 12.49.2, 14.6.1, 14.7.1, 14.8.1; Liv. *Per.* 116; App. *BC* 3.1.2; Val. Max. 9.15.1. Perhaps his name was Gaius Amatius Chamates with the Greek name Herophilus (hero-lover).

<sup>28</sup> Our sources never mention it, but Antony may have used the excuse that he executed Marius as if in a blood feud. Marius the general had put to death the grandfather of Antony, Marcus Antonius orator, in the proscription of 87/86. In fact, the Amatius became a nuisance to Antony immediately, who had his own schedule for eliminating Brutus and Cassius.

<sup>29</sup> Cic. *Ad Att.* 14.20; Plut. *Caes.* 49.10, *Ant.* 54.6, 82.1; Suet. *Div. Iul.* 52.2; *Div. Aug.* 17.5; Dio 51.15.5. Modern scholars such as Gelzar *Caesar* (Cambridge 1968, English translation by Peter Needham), 257, n. 1 have expressed doubt, with good reason.

<sup>30</sup> According to a tombstone, see Stahelin, *RE* 11.754.

Friction between them arose so early, that he is barred from paternity. What seems most likely, despite Cleopatra's insistence that Julius was the father, is that she was the victim of rape in Sept./Oct. 47 by soldiers of Ptolemy before her escape to Julius, a matter she kept secret for obvious reasons. Caesarion's conception most likely occurred in Oct. 47 and her escape to Julius soon followed (even if the story of arriving in the rolled up carpet may be fiction). Regardless of his true parentage, Caesarion was elevated to pharaoh as Ptolemy XV on 2 Sept. 44.<sup>31</sup> He was deliberately used as a weapon against Caesar Octavian, whose claim to be *Divi filius* (son of the god Julius) by adoption was parried by Cleopatra's claims (later supported by Antony) that the biological son of the god deserved Julius' legacy. Because there could be only one son of Julius, Caesar Octavian had him executed on 23 Aug. 30 BC after the fall of Egypt.<sup>32</sup> The murder of Caesarion does not prove that Caesar Octavian knew him to be the son of Julius, only that his survival was a threat.

Valerius Maximus tells us of a most incredible impostor, who insisted he was the nephew of Augustus by the emperor's sister Octavia Minor, a woman regarded as the model of femininity for the empire.<sup>33</sup> Claiming she had ordered him exposed on account of his bodily weakness, and another baby was substituted for him, whom Octavia raised (her only son M. Claudius Marcellus, 42–23 BC), he pressed a claim to the vast fortune that would have been due any child of hers. The emperor was so outraged at this slur on his sister's reputation that he sentenced the impostor to the galleys as a slave.

Upon the death of Augustus on 19 Aug. AD 14, rumors circulated in Rome that he had recently reconciled with and planned to elevate as his heir (in place of Tiberius) his grandson M. Julius Caesar Vipsanianus—whom we know as M. Agrippa Postumus. Augustus had formally adopted Agrippa Postumus and Tiberius both in AD 4 but subsequently confined Agrippa Postumus to an island for his truculent behavior. As soon as Augustus died, the empress Livia and/or the confidant Sallust the Younger immediately sent a centurion to execute Agrippa Postumus.<sup>34</sup> A rescue operation by his loyal freed slave M. Julius Clemens came too late. Thereupon, Clemens, on account of his close resemblance to his master, decided to assume his former master's identity and rebel against Tiberius, seeking out others who opposed Tiberius. As the story of remarkable escape from

<sup>31</sup> The short-lived Ptolemy XIV was the younger brother of Cleopatra and Ptolemy XIII. A mere child-ruler, he was elevated to the throne (47 – Aug. 44 BC), upon his older brother's death, but never exercised any real power. Historians assume Cleopatra poisoned him to make way for her son.

<sup>32</sup> Plut. *Ant.* 82.1; Suet. *Div. Aug.* 17.5; Dio 51.15.5.

<sup>33</sup> Val. Max. 9.15.2. Not known anywhere else.

<sup>34</sup> Vell. 2.112.7; Tac. *Ann.* 2.39–40; Suet. *Tib.* 25; Dio 57.3.5–6 blames Tiberius.

death circulated, hopes to replace Tiberius rose. Clemens mostly appeared by night to win over followers until the secret police finally caught him. His last words sum up well the pretender's view of the world. Under torture, when asked by Tiberius, who probably knew Clemens personally, "how did you come to be Agrippa?" he defiantly replied "in the same way you came to be Caesar!"<sup>35</sup>

Clemens' reply epitomizes the view of the pretender that his claim is as good as the ruler's, but one must appreciate contemporary Roman politics for its maximum value. Clemens and many discontented members of the aristocracy regarded Tiberius as temperamentally unfit to rule, but his mother's incessant badgering of Augustus and his own persistence had wormed his way into power. Some Senators so hated him they would aid Clemens, according to Tacitus, although it is possible their plan was to eliminate Clemens once Tiberius had been deposed and slain. Others possibly believed he was Agrippa, and even an untested Agrippa was preferable to Tiberius, a man known for his dissimulation. Just as they feared, the republicanism Tiberius feigned at the start of his reign gave way to totalitarianism as he aged.

Based on his resemblance to his late master, Clemens concluded he was just as good a man to rule as Tiberius. From personal observation he knew the workings of the imperial court. In his own eyes, Tiberius was an illegitimate ruler, so not only was it fair to challenge him, but he had everything to gain from trying. Tacitus says that Clemens's uprising bordered on civil war.<sup>36</sup> The willingness of so many people of all levels of Roman society to back Clemens (and some believed him to be Agrippa) against the incumbent emperor, a man tried and tested in politics and warfare, indicates the widespread unpopularity of Tiberius and his regime, a factor which has always enticed pretenders to raise the banner of rebellion. Although Clemens knew he was a pretender, his message to Tiberius was you are no better than I am.<sup>37</sup>

The unpopularity of Tiberius, if anything, grew as his reign continued. Widely suspected in the death of his popular nephew and adopted son, Germanicus Caesar, Tiberius eventually threw aside his cover and openly arrested the wife and children of Germanicus. He banished Agrippina to the small island

<sup>35</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 2.40: "percontanti Tiberio quo modo Agrippa factus esset respondisse fertur quo modo tu Caesar!"; Dio 57.16.4: ἐπειτ' ἐπειδὴ μηδὲν ἐξελάλησεν, ἐπύθετο αὐτοῦ "πῶς Ἀγρίππας ἐγένον;" καὶ ὃς ἀπεκρίνατο ὅτι "οὕτως ὡς καὶ σὺ Καῖσαρ." And then when he said nothing, he asked him "how did you become Agrippa?" And he replied "the same way you became a Caesar."

<sup>36</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 2.39.1.

<sup>37</sup> Nor should we exclude the possibility that in his dying moments, Clemens shaped himself into the mold of the Roman hero that turns the tables on his oppressor, such as Mucius Scaevola and Atilius Regulus.

Pandateria (Ventotene), and imprisoned her two older sons, first Nero Caesar and later Drusus Caesar. Therefore, when rumors circulated that Drusus Caesar had escaped and was traveling in the Cyclades Islands, considerable alarm arose within the Imperial household even though the real Drusus Caesar was still alive. Some disloyal former slaves of the Emperor put up the impostor and publicly recognized him as Drusus.<sup>38</sup> The plan was for him to go east and take over the armies in Syria formerly under his father's (Germanicus) command. Tacitus places the pretender's venture in the Aegean Sea in AD 32, but Christopher Tuplin has argued for a year earlier, before the fall of Sejanus (18 Oct. AD 31).<sup>39</sup> Tuplin has suggested that Sejanus played the pretender to his own advantage by raising Tiberius' fears about the danger posed by the real Drusus Caesar, then languishing in the Palatine dungeon. Suddenly, however, the venture lost momentum without explanation, although we can guess the cause of its failure. Just as the rebellion of Lambert Simnel in 1487 against Henry VII failed, so did this plot. Lambert Simnel rose up pretending to be the Earl of Warwick, then a prisoner in the Tower of London. People knew the genuine article was still alive in both cases, so the pretender was easily recognized for what he was. When Sejanus and Tiberius imprisoned the real Drusus Caesar, they accused him of plotting against Tiberius and circulated accounts of his wickedness. His incarceration was no secret. A moral for all pretenders to follow is to make sure not to impersonate someone who can be produced to discredit the scheme unless one has Mercury's abilities at assuming a new identity. By the time the governor of Macedon and Achaëa reached Actium to arrest the impostor, he had changed his itinerary for Italy and soon shed his identity (perhaps truthfully), claiming to be a member of the Junius Silanus family.<sup>40</sup> Tacitus' knowledge of the pretender ends here, so we do not learn how he was punished, but for his pretensions to the throne, Sejanus was executed and his family and followers purged.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 5.10.

<sup>39</sup> C. J. Tuplin, "The False Drusus of AD 31 and the Fall of Sejanus," *Latomus* 46, 1987, 781–805.

<sup>40</sup> Exactly which Junius Silanus deserves reconsideration. Rex Warner (Penguin translator) believed the impostor took on the identity of the son of M. Junius Silanus (cos. AD 19), a courtier of high rank, whose daughter was chosen to marry Gaius Caligula. A better guess would be the son of C. Junius Silanus (cos. AD 10), for the father had been convicted of extortion and banished under Tiberius for mismanaging the province of Asia, Tac. *Ann.* 3.66–69.

<sup>41</sup> During the purge, Tiberius gave orders that should Sejanus kill him, his guards were to release the real Drusus Caesar from the dungeon and make him their new emperor. Tiberius survived the purge, but did not release Drusus Caesar from prison, where he died later, Suet. *Tib.* 54, 61; Dio 58.13.1.

The issue of impostors plays a major role in one of the only two Roman novels to survive, Petronius's *Satyricon*, in which two conmen journey across Italy pretending to be wealthy and childless. As they pass through towns, the townspeople lavish them with hospitality, hoping to be adopted and to inherit their (fictitious) fortunes. The impostors enjoy the kindness and generosity of others, imply that they will reciprocate with their own wealth, but then depart before their ruse can be discovered. Modern scholars have often cited *The Satyricon* to analyze Roman identity, mistaken identity, and legacy hunting in the first century AD. The novel is thought to be the work of T. Petronius Arbiter (suf. AD 62), a courtier in Nero's court who joined a conspiracy against the emperor and was ordered to commit suicide.<sup>42</sup> Identity and impersonation play just as important a role in the other surviving Roman novel, Apuleius' *The Metamorphoses* or *The Golden Ass*, from most of a century later, ca. AD 160. For example, a character with the rare name Thelyphron is mistaken for another man by the same name with disastrous consequences for himself. Tlepolemus impersonates Haemus the bandit king to rescue his bride Charite from a gang of robbers, although he does not live long to enjoy his marriage. And the protagonist, Lucius, having been turned into an ass, although able to understand human speech, is mistaken by all for a real ass and is treated as one, suffering much animal cruelty from nearly everyone. But the greater deception of the novel is the nature of the metamorphosis, which the reader believes refers to Lucius' transformation into donkey-form, but is actually his soul reaching enlightenment by joining the Isis cult, the ancient world's version of the Hari Krishnas. The entire story impersonated a fairy tale or epic before revealing its true self to be a spiritual journey of redemption and enlightenment. Of course, the real Apuleius was mocking such tales.

Perhaps the most remarkable story of ancient pretenders comes in two parts, when two different impostors made a bid for power as the deposed emperor Nero. They have attracted considerable scholarly attention.<sup>43</sup> After years of misrule, during which he decimated the aristocracy and indulged the commoners, Nero mishandled a famine in Rome, was declared a public enemy, and killed

<sup>42</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 16.18–19.

<sup>43</sup> A. E. Pappano, "The False Neros," *CJ* 32, 1937, 385–392; A. Momigliano *C.A.H.* 10, 741; Syme *Tacitus* 1958, 518; Bishop, *Nero: The Man and the Legend* (London 1964), 167; Scullard *From Gracchi to Nero* (London 1965), 332; P. A. Gallivan, "The False Neros: A Reexamination," *Historia* 1973, 364–365; Christopher J. Tuplin "The False Neros of the First Century A.D.," in C. Deroux, *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History* (Brussels *Latomus* 1989), 364–404; M. Gwyn Morgan, "The Three Minor Pretenders in Tacitus *Histories II*," *Latomus* 52, 1993, 769–796; Rhiannon Ash *Commentary on Tacitus Histories II* (Cambridge University Press 2007) *loc. cit.*

himself on the verge of capture on 8/9 June 68 with the famous last words *qualis artifex pereo!* (what a great artist—I perish!). The immediate celebration that followed his death obscures Nero's general popularity prior to his final months on the throne. His death resolved one civil war, but two more civil wars followed in the year 69, at the end of which Vespasian established the Flavian dynasty. Just after the outbreak of the war between Otho and Vitellius, word came from the East (March 69) that Nero had miraculously survived and was mounting a comeback.<sup>44</sup> The impostor greatly resembled Nero and used his musical skill to enhance the deception.

Tacitus thought him a slave, and neither he nor Dio ever gave his real name.<sup>45</sup> The impostor left Greece probably with the hope of raising funds from the Parthians. He was recruiting civilians and military men to his banner (some by force), when adverse winds forced him to stop on the island of Cythnus.<sup>46</sup> A centurion named Sisenna refused to join him and fled, probably spreading word of his activities and whereabouts.<sup>47</sup> The new governor of Galatia and Pamphylia, Nonius Asprenas arrived with his two triremes, whereupon the false-Nero tried to win over the crew and asked for convoy to Syria.<sup>48</sup> Quick on his feet, Nonius Asprenas stormed the Neronian vessel and executed the impostor. The body was sent around the provinces as a curiosity piece, and his *torvitas vultus* (fierce expression) was admired for its very close likeness to Nero.

Many people thought the impostor very closely resembled Nero, and others really believed him to be Nero.<sup>49</sup> Prophecies circulating from the Sibylline Oracles seemed to confirm Nero's escape in 68 before his ominous return:

A mighty king shall like a runaway slave  
Flee over the Euphrates' stream unseen,  
Unknown, who shall some time dare loathsome guilt  
Of matricide, and many other things,

<sup>44</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 2.8–9; Suet. *Ner.* 40.2, 57.1; Dio 63/64.9.3 (Xiphilinus); Zon. 9.15; Dio Chrys. *Orat.* 21.8–10 (300D); St. Aug. *Civ. Dei.* 20.19.

<sup>45</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 2.8; Dio 64.9.3 (Xiphilinus)

<sup>46</sup> Although Zonaras' manuscript reads Cydnus, which is a river, Tac. *Hist.* 2.8.1 correctly has *Cythnum*.

<sup>47</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 2.8.2. Sisenna may possibly be a Cornelius Sisenna, and thus kin to the historian and the family of Statilus Taurus (whose son was a Sisenna, and whose wife may have been a Cornelia Sisenna).

<sup>48</sup> Nonius Asprenas, a man descended from Augustus' friend (the poisoner) and also from Varus' nephew who was the only hero of the *Bellum Varianum* in AD 9. Another member of the family had joined the conspiracy to assassinate Gaius Caligula.

<sup>49</sup> Arthur Weigel, *Nero* (Garden City 1930), 394, speculated that it may have been Nero. Weigel may have been influenced by the *Sibylline Oracles*.

Having confidence in his most wicked hands.  
 And many for the throne with blood  
 Rome's soil while he flees over Parthian land.  
 And out of Syria shall come Rome's foremost man [Vespasian],  
     And from the limits of the earth shall come  
 Fleeing and pondering sharp things in his mind,  
 A matricidal man who every land  
 Shall overpower and over all things rule.<sup>50</sup>

However, this pretender never made it to the Euphrates, losing his life on Cythnus. Arthur Weigel rightly notes that the prompt action of Nonius Asprenas to kill the pretender at once could easily be the reaction of one who recognized the former emperor and killed him to eliminate a thorny problem. But he was just the first of Nero's impersonators.

A second false-Nero emerged in Asia Minor during the reign of Titus (r. AD 79–81), whose true name was Terentius Maximus.<sup>51</sup> Singing to the tune of his lyre in Neronian fashion, he raised a following and made an effort to fulfill the Sibylline Oracles by seeking aid from the Parthians across the Euphrates River. Forced out of the Roman Empire, he went to Parthia where Nero's reputation was generally favorable for the manner in which he had resolved the Armenia crisis. However, Titus threatened consequences against the Parthians if they did not turn the pretender over, and after his true identity was discovered, they did so. The exact date of this false-Nero's rise has been analyzed by Tuplin, who times it to follow the eruption of Vesuvius (24 Oct. 79) on account of Sibylline Oracles 4.130–139.<sup>52</sup>

But when from deep cleft of Italian land  
 Fire shall come flashing forth in the broad heaven,  
 And many cities burn and men destroy,  
 And much black ashes shall fill the great sky,  
 And small drops like red earth shall fall from heaven,  
 Then know the anger of the God of heaven,  
 For that they without reason shall destroy  
 The nation of the pious. And then strife

<sup>50</sup> *Sibylline Oracles* 4.119–124, 5.488–491.

<sup>51</sup> Joseph. *AJ* 106M; Dio 66.19.3; Zon 11.18.

<sup>52</sup> Tuplin (1989), 390 ff; *Sibylline Oracles* 4.130–39 (= 169–78 in the alternate numbering system). Dr. Randall Colaizzi has informed me that the dating of the eruption of the Vesuvius to August is a scribal misinterpretation, and that the winds on 24 October better match the eruption's flow of events than 24 August.



Awakened of war shall come to the West,  
 Shall also come the fugitive of Rome,  
 Bearing a great spear, having marched across  
 Euphrates with his many myriads.

The incentive for the pretender was probably two-fold, for it is quite likely he decided to bid for power when Vespasian died on 23 June 79. The eruption of Vesuvius, so closely conforming to the Sibylline Oracles made him commit to the masquerade. Once he was turned over to the Roman authorities, he was no doubt punished extremely severely.

Oddly enough, Nero had a slave named Sporus who greatly resembled Nero's second empress, Poppaea Sabina. After her death, Nero frequently cavorted with Sporus and even underwent a mock-wedding in AD 67. Sporus witnessed Nero's suicide, but outlived him only by one year, for after favor under Otho, he committed suicide to avoid punishment under Vitellius.<sup>53</sup> Identity and resemblance featured as major themes of the Neronian court, with the unfortunate result that Nero infamously executed all of his heirs-apparent to preempt conspirators who would replace him with a cousin who also descended from Augustus.<sup>54</sup> Thus, it is no wonder several impostors thought they could capitalize on the culture of identity by impersonating the leader of the movement.

Even more false-Neros emerged, for Tacitus tells us he will mention each in their proper chronology, but we lack the second half of *The Histories*. We only have Suetonius' brief testimony about a third pretender at *Ner.* 57.2, "And finally 20 years later, when I was a young man (between 19 and 30), a man of unknown origin appeared who insisted he was Nero, and so favorable was Nero's name among the Parthians that he was aided energetically and only with reluc-

<sup>53</sup> Suet. *Ner.* 28.1–2, 29, 46.2, 48.1, 49.3; Dio 62.28.3, 3a (Xiph. 172.1–15); Oros. 7.7.2.

<sup>54</sup> Some of the victims include M. Junius Silanus (cos. AD 46) upon accession in 54, Tac. *Ann.* 13.1; Dio 61.6.4–5; Claudius' son Britannicus in 55, Tac. *Ann.* 13.15–17; Suet. *Ner.* 33.2–3, *Tit.* 2; Dio 56.7.4; Faustus Cornelius Sulla in 56, Tac. *Ann.* 14.57 and likewise Rubellius Plautus at the same time, Tac. *Ann.* 14.57–59; Dio 62.14; Octavia his first wife in 62, Tac. *Ann.* 14.60–64; Suet. *Ner.* 35.2–3; Ps-Seneca *Octavia*; Dio 62.13.1–4; Zon. 11.12.12–20; Johan. Ant. Frag. 90 M; Antonia daughter of Claudius in 66, Suet. *Ner.* 35.4 Dec. Junius Silanus Torquatus in AD 64, Tac. *Ann.* 15.35; Dio 62.27.2; L. Junius Silanus in 66, Tac. *Ann.* 16.7–9. Oros. *Contra Pag.* 7.7.9: *sed ne parricidiis quidem abstinuit, matrem fratrem sororem uxorem ceterosque omnes cognatos et propinquos sine haesitatione prostravit*, "He did not even refrain from murdering members of his own family and without any compunction laid low his mother, brother, sister, wife, and all the rest of his blood relations and kinsmen." Above all, Nero was infamous for killing his mother, Agrippina.

tance was he handed over.”<sup>55</sup> Some scholars have wished to combine this false-Nero with Terentius Maximus, but the timing of their uprisings does not appear to match, as Suetonius dates this pretender to ca. 88. It is fairly likely that Tacitus’ lost books include this third charlatan, and Lucian also makes mention of a pretender that may correspond to this man, or possibly even a fourth pretender.<sup>56</sup>

This study closes with the pretender Antoninus Bassus, who seized the throne against the unpopular usurper, Macrinus in 217. Although we regard the emperor Severus Antoninus, better known to us as Caracalla, as a brute and lunatic, he was incredibly popular within the Roman army whose salaries he raised, following his father’s advice to look out for the army and not concern himself about anyone else. After a six year reign, during which he granted universal citizenship to raise the tax base, murdered his brother Geta, murdered many senators, and slaughtered 20,000 in Alexandria who booed his appearance and mocked him for killing Geta, he was killed by Macrinus on 8 Apr. 217. Macrinus seized power on 11 April 217, but was always despised within the army, for which reason he was vulnerable when a plausible heir to Caracalla appeared.

In May 217, Julia Maesa the sister-in-law of Septimius Severus, longing to return to a position of importance, circulated the rumor to the garrison at Emesa that her grandson Varius Avitus Bassianus was actually the illegitimate son of Caracalla and her daughter Julia Soaemis.<sup>57</sup> In fact, Bassianus was not a biological descendent of Septimius Severus or Caracalla, but only a maternal cousin once removed (Caracalla and Julia Soaemis were first cousins on their mothers’ side). He was a familiar sight to the garrison of Emesa, as many of the soldiers had seen him perform the rites to the sun god Heliogabalus as the god’s priest. Hating Macrinus for his unwarlike nature and the salary reductions he had imposed, the troops proclaimed Bassianus emperor as Marcus Aurelius Antoninus on 16 May. When the local prefect Julianus attempted to quell the rebellion, he was defeated and slain. His head was sent to the nearby Macrinus. Therefore he received a dreadful surprise to find the head of Julianus. Macrinus at once

<sup>55</sup> *Denique cum post viginti annos adulescente me exstisset condicionis incertae qui se Neronem esse iactaret, tam favorable nomen eius apud Parthos fuit, ut vehementer aditus et vix redditus sit.*

<sup>56</sup> Lucian, *Remarks Addressed to an Illiterate Book Collector* 20: You were made to believe at one time that your features resembled those of a certain emperor. We had had a pseudo-Alexander, and a pseudo-Philip, the fuller, and there was a pseudo-Nero as recently as our own grandfathers’ times: you were for adding one more to the noble army of pseudos (<http://www.sacred-texts.com/cla/luc/wl3/wl320.htm>).

<sup>57</sup> Hrd. 5.3.10; 5.4.3; SHA *Car.* 9.2, *Macr.* 9.4, 14.2, 15.2, *Elag.* 1.4; Dio 78.31.3, 78.32.2–3.

scraped together forces and marched to Emesa to suppress the rebellion himself, thinking the pretender a mere boy, but was defeated in battle on 8 June and fled.<sup>58</sup> He almost escaped, but was captured and executed at Chalcedon. Thus the empire fell into the lap of the false-Antoninus, better known to us as Heliogabalus or Elagabalus, the worst of Roman emperors.<sup>59</sup>

Rome never recovered fully from the damage Heliogabalus created in his four years as emperor. He and his Rasputin of a mother corrupted all they touched. The army weakened, and Rome's frontiers fell under renewed attack. Many noble families were eliminated, and he practiced every form of outrage including raping a Vestal Virgin. He squandered the funds in the treasury on lavish banquets and frivolous expenses. His excesses finally persuaded his grandmother that he could not be restrained, and she obliged him to adopt as his heir his cousin (her other grandson) Alexianus, now Alexander Severus. Jealous of him, Heliogabalus plotted to kill him. When he had to present his heir to the Praetorian Guard on 11 March 218, they applauded the heir but ignored the emperor, provoking him to order the execution of everyone so disrespectful. This was the last straw for the Guards, who attacked. He fled with his mother, but they were caught in a latrine and executed. His reign of three years and 10 months (the same length as Caligula, another dreadful emperor) was a blight on the empire.

Heliogabalus owed his rise to his resemblance to Caracalla and to his grandmother's ambition.<sup>60</sup> The discovery that he was not a son of Caracalla played no role in his demise, nor did his family (pretenders all of them) lose the throne for it. Unlike in the case of Alexander Balas or the false-Smerdis, there was no legitimate family to wrest back the throne, so it stayed in the grasp of Julia Maesa. The execution of Macrinus and his son had seen to that. However, he was such a bad emperor that it would have been better for Rome had Macrinus prevailed.

The common thread in these episodes is the exceptional likeness of the pretender to the royal, to whom they had no biological connection. Roman delight in such coincidental resemblance is documented with encyclopedic curiosity by the anthologists Pliny the Elder and Valerius Maximus, who list a series of remarkable cases of unrelated look-alikes.<sup>61</sup> The pretender who aspired to wealth,

<sup>58</sup> Hrd. 5.4.6–12; Dio 78.37.3–39.1, 40.4–5

<sup>59</sup> See Edward Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Chapter 6.

<sup>60</sup> See note 57 above.

<sup>61</sup> Plin. *NH* 7.12.52–56: Antiochus IV and Artemo, Pompey Magnus to both Vibius and Publicius, Pompey Strabo to Menogenes his cook, Cornelius Sura and a fisherman, another Menogenes to Valerius Messalla the censor, In a one case the name of the more distinguished man honored his look-alike: L. Munatius Plancus and the actor Rubrius Plan-

fame, and power could more easily persuade provincials, whose contact with the genuine article was often limited to statuary, coinage, or similar artistic representations. To persuade more crucial backers from the nobility, who had regular contact with the crown, the impostor could only succeed if he had a striking resemblance to a lost royal, and it helped if the incumbent was so highly unpopular that people would risk everything to get rid of him (as in the cases of Tiberius and Macrinus). A long delay after the death of the royal was not always helpful, for while it gave time for memories of exact details to fade, it also gave the new ruler time to tighten their grasp on power, making it harder to overthrow him. Even though communication and technology to detect impostors was limited in the ancient world, people so highly treasured the memory of a single encounter with the ruler that they remained firm in their opinions (accurate or not) of what that ruler looked like. This could help the charismatic pretender win friends if he could jog and reuse the memory of a minor event, but it also worked against impostors who could not possibly remember every detail of a life that was not their own. For corroboration, one can recall how steadfastly certain acquaintances of Anastasia Romanov supported Anna Anderson's suit to recover the Romanov fortune, while others to whom she had slipped up on a minor detail (such as a misplaced comma in a letter she had seen) adamantly opposed her for the impostor she really was.

---

cus, but more often the name of the less distinguished man rubbed off on the more distinguished man in ridicule: Serapio the hog vendor and Scipio Serapio, Salutio the actor and Scipio Salutio, Spinther the actor and Cornelius Lentulus Spinther (cos. 57), Pamphilius the actor and Caecilius Metellus Pamphilius, Burbuleius and Scribonius Curio Burbuleius, and a fisherman and Cornelius Sura. Cassius Severus was taunted for his likeness to the gladiator Armentarius, and Seneca's brother Annaeus Gallio was regularly mistaken for a freedman Castellanus, as was the senator Agrippinus for Paris the actor. Most impressively the slave dealer Toranius sold Marc Antony two identical slaves as if they were twins, but in fact one was a Galatean from Asia and the other from beyond the Alps, so they did not speak the same language. When confronted with his deception, he defended the price by emphasizing the incredible twin-like resemblance of these perfect strangers. Val. Max. 9.14.1—ext. 3 knew of Vibius and Publicius, who resembled Pompey Magnus and his father's resemblance to Menogenes the cook, as well as Serapio the hog vendor and Scipio Serapio, Menogenes to Valerius Messalla, and Burbuleius to Scribonius Curio. He also cited Artemo and Antiochus IV, Hybreas of Mylasa and a slave, and a third story possibly of Cornelius Sura that repeats the punch line of Macr. *Sat.* 2.4.20 (about Augustus). See also note 25.

# III

## Greek Literature



# The Search for Truth in *Odyssey* 3 and 4

REYES BERTOLÍN  
University of Calgary

In the next pages, I would examine certain stories told by characters in books 3 and 4 of the *Odyssey* and contrast them in regards to their different use of poetics, something which to my knowledge has not yet been systematically done.<sup>1</sup> An obvious parallelism exists between these two books. In *Odyssey* 3, Telemachos arrives in Pylos in search of news of his father. In Pylos, Nestor narrates his own homecoming and some particular events in which Odysseus took part. In book 4, Telemachos is in Sparta and both Menelaos and Helen have a chance to retell some events involving Odysseus or their own homecoming.

I argue throughout this paper that book 3 exemplifies what has been called “poetics of truth” whereas book 4 exemplifies the so-called “poetics of fiction.”<sup>2</sup> In order to do so, I use another poetic category, namely that of the opposition between *kleos* (glory) and *penthos* (sorrow), which are intrinsic parts in the creation of epic poetry. In book 3, the category of *kleos* is explicitly mentioned on four occasions (3.78, 3.83, 3.204, and 3.380). But more importantly, *kleos* is recreated by Nestor’s narrative, which is insistently portrayed as truthful throughout the whole book. Therefore, I shall argue the equivalence between *kleos* and truth.

The category of *penthos* is evident throughout *Odyssey* 4. I will argue that its presence is a determining factor in order to retain the narrative in an ambiguous stage between the truth and lies. The impossibility of overcoming *penthos* and transforming it into a narrative of *kleos* parallels the impossibility of distinguishing between truth and fiction.

---

<sup>1</sup> Book 4 has received more attention than book 3. Olson (1989) contrasts the stories of Menelaos and Helen and Schmiel (1972) discusses the fact that under the apparently beautiful and perfect atmosphere there are deep running problems between the couple.

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of those terms see Finkelberg 1998.

*Poetics of Truth—Poetics of Fiction*

According to Finkelberg in *The Birth of Literary Fiction in Ancient Greece*, “poetics of truth” is opposed to “poetics of fiction.” In the Homeric text, the poetics of truth is expressed by placing the ultimate responsibility of the narration not on a human agent, but on a divine eyewitness. Moreover, the text is construed as a “message of reality and means to an end.” According to Finkelberg, this means that the text intends to make reference to a reality existing outside of the text. On the contrary, poetics of fiction places responsibility of the narration on a human creator and the text expresses a reality *sui generis* and is an end in itself, i.e. the text does not adhere to an external truth and is auto-referential.<sup>3</sup>

The concept of poetics of truth implies that the external narrator, Homer, tells the “true story” (i.e. it took place in reality outside of the narration) of Achilles as the Muses reveal it to him. The fact that the story originates with the Muses frees Homer from having to invent events. He becomes a transmitter of the truth. On the other hand, the poetics of fiction implies that the concept underlying the narrative is that of verisimilitude (*to eoikos*), not that of truth. It is irrelevant whether the story took place in reality, but it matters that it seems as if it could have taken place.<sup>4</sup> In this way, in the poetics of fiction, verisimilitude prevails over reality.

## Kleos—Penthos

Fränkel asserted that in Homer “only what is sorrowful is worth preservation in song,”<sup>5</sup> and thus established a connection between the sorrowful (*penthos*) and the song (*kleos*). In the Homeric epics there is certainly an intrinsic connection between narration and a previous suffering and lament, as seen primarily in Odysseus’ crying at the end of book 8 as a starting point for his narrative in books 9 to 12. This connection is also made explicit by Alcinoos in book 8.579–580 of the *Odyssey*:

τὸν δὲ θεοὶ μὲν τεύξαν, ἐπεκλώσαντο δ’ ὄλεθρον  
ἀνθρώποις, ἵνα ᾗσι καὶ ἐσσομένοισιν αἰοιδή.

<sup>3</sup> Finkelberg 1998, 67.

<sup>4</sup> cf. Aristotle’s famous definition of history and poetry.

<sup>5</sup> Fränkel 1962, 15.



This the gods accomplished, they spun destruction to mortals, so that it may become song for men not born yet.<sup>6</sup>

According to Alcinoos, the war of Troy was devised by the gods in order for it to be turned into a song in the future. His philosophy is that great sufferings inspire great songs. Yet, this is only the case if the sufferings are actually remembered. Whereas the *penthos* seems to be necessary for the song and the corresponding *kleos* to come into being, the mere existence of *penthos* does not guarantee that there will be a song. Finkelberg has noticed that in Homer only those episodes that are connected with great events either in the Trojan War or in the homecomings are preserved.<sup>7</sup> Episodes that fall outside of this grouping have vanished forever, but it does not mean that their protagonists did not suffer as much as the protagonists of the episodes related by Homer. *Penthos* can be a source of *kleos*, but only if it also implies participation in a significant event, which, of course, is up to the Muses to remember and the inspired poet to narrate.

According to Nagy, both *kleos* and *penthos* constitute two of the major poetic categories on which the epic is built. They are alternative elements, since they are experienced by one character at different times or occur at the same time but experienced by different characters. For the characters involved in the situation the suffering constitutes *penthos*, for those who are either not involved and are just listening to the suffering being narrated or for those who have achieved some detachment and objectivity over the situation the sufferings have been transformed into *kleos*.<sup>8</sup>

The opposite nature of *penthos* and *kleos* is evident in passages such as *Iliad* 4.197. Agamemnon calls the physician Machaon to attend to Menelaos, who has been wounded by an enemy's arrow. The wounding constitutes glory for the enemy but suffering for the Greeks: τῷ μὲν κλέος, ἄμμι δὲ πένθος (for him glory, but for us sorrow). In this example, *kleos* is simultaneously present with the *penthos* when experienced by different persons. On the other hand, *kleos* can also express a future result of a painful action. This we see for instance in *Odyssey* 3.203–204 as Telemachos makes the explicit association of *kleos* and song when he speaks about the fame of Orestes:

καὶ λίην κεῖνος μὲν ἐτίσατο, καὶ οἱ Ἀχαιοὶ  
οἴσουσι κλέος εὐρὺ καὶ ἔσσομένοισι ἀοιδὴν

<sup>6</sup> All of the translations are my own.

<sup>7</sup> Finkelberg 1998, 83.

<sup>8</sup> Nagy 1999, 95, 98–100.

and that one [Orestes] took revenge excessively, and the Achaeans will carry his wide fame and song for men to be born.

Contrary to the previous example of the *Iliad*, *kleos* in this example has not only a connotation of the present glory, but it carries with it a future result. This result is realized when *kleos* refers to a deed removed from the sphere of immediate contact, as expressed by the pronoun *κεῖνος*, which refers to an object or circumstance distant both from the speaker and the addressee. Since Orestes' deed is recent, the song of his revenge is yet to be composed. More commonly, however, *kleos* refers to the present glory of the deeds of man in the past. Such deeds are remembered through song and in a sense the song becomes a substitute for the man, who may no longer be alive.<sup>9</sup>

The second narrative category, that of *penthos*—sorrow refers to the sufferings in which the characters of the stories are involved and that have not yet become—at least for them—part of an objective (third person) narrative. Whereas *kleos* commands the objectivity of the external narration, *penthos* dwells on the subjectivity of the internal narrative and refers to a stage previous to external narration.

### *Kleos and Truth*

In the Homeric epics, *kleos* represents a type of glory that is not independent of narration. The *klea andron* are stories about past heroes, narrated either at the camp, as Patroclus does in the *Iliad*, or at the banquet, as Phemios and Demodocos do in the *Odyssey*. In order for *kleos* to exist the deeds that provoke it have to be narrated. The purpose of narration is that events and their protagonists are remembered. That which is not narrated by the poet is not remembered and remains in the state of *lethe*—oblivion. On the other hand, that which is remembered through narration becomes undying. Immortal glory (*aphthiton kleos*) is the counterpart of mortality.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Biles 2003, 203.

<sup>10</sup> Thus, the most renowned Homeric epithet of *kleos* is *aphthiton* (*Il.* 9.413)—imperishable. The adjective is a negative compound built on the verb *φθίω/φθίνω*—to dwindle, to disappear. Another characteristic epithet of *kleos* is *asbeston* (*Od.* 4.584)—unquenched, ceaseless, also built as a negative compound. Both epithets express the negative result of a primary process of decay. This process of decay has been counteracted by the remembrance implied in the narration. As much as there is an association between the narration of the *kleos* and immortality, there is an association between forgetfulness (*lethe*) and death. It is not coincidental that Lethe is one of the rivers of the underworld

On the other hand, *alethes*—true is a negative compound of *lethe*. What is true is that which is not forgotten,<sup>11</sup> and therefore not dead. In relation to *kleos*, both *aphthiton* and *alethes* can be treated as synonyms. That which is not forgotten constitutes a *kleos* as well. As much as *kleos* depends on narration *alethes* also depends on the act of proclaiming or narrating certain events and it is not an epistemological characteristic independent of narration.<sup>12</sup> Only if something is narrated by the proper narrator, can *kleos* become a vehicle of truth.

### *Penthos and Indifference to Truth*

Conversely, *penthos* or any kind of lamentation is opposed to narration as we see in *Od.* 8.536–541:

κέκλυτε, Φαιήκων ἡγήτορες ἡδὲ μέδοντες,  
 Δημόδοκος δ' ἤδη σχεθέτω φόρμιγγα λίγειαν·  
 οὐ γάρ πως πάντεσσι χαριζόμενος τάδ' αἰεῖδει.  
 ἐξ οὗ δορπέομέν τε καὶ ὥρορε θεῖος ἀοιδός,  
 ἐκ τοῦ δ' οὐ πω παύσατ' ὀϊζυροῖο γόοιο  
 ὁ ξεῖνος· μάλα πού μιν ἄχος φρένας ἀμφιβέβηκεν.

Listen, you leaders and counselors of the Phaiakians, let Demodocos stop already the shrill lyre. For not pleasing to all he sings this song. After dinner and after the divine singer started, since then our guest has not ceased in his sorry lament. Certainly pain has surrounded him in the heart.

Alcinoos speaks these words when he sees that Demodocos' story about the Trojan Horse has moved Odysseus to uncontrolled tears. Obviously, Odysseus is not yet able to separate himself from the sorrow that his adventures entail. He will only do that through his own narration. In this example it is clear that pain

---

and once a soul has passed through it there is no coming back. Whereas *kleos* implies immortality, forgetfulness implies death.

<sup>11</sup> Not all uses of the verb *letho* in Homer imply lack of memory as much as a lack of awareness or perception. In any case, the result is the same.

<sup>12</sup> Pratt (1993, 43) argues that *kleos* is ambiguous with respect to truth value, as seen in *Il.* 2. 484–487, where *kleos* is used in its etymological sense of hearsay and is opposed to the knowledge of the Muses. On the other hand, Strauss-Clay (1983, 19) argues that it was the role of the Muses to transform the mere *kleos* of this same passage into *kleos aphthiton*.

interrupts narration. On the other hand, this same pain causes the new narration to start.

For the Greeks, it was clear that the saying “no pain, no gain” holds true. Certainly without reenacting the sorrow through means of narration no *kleos* can be achieved. Any sorrow that is not narrated because it seems too hurtful will not be transformed into *kleos*.<sup>13</sup> Since *kleos* is the result of narration and in this sense parallels the concept of truth, and *penthos* avoids making the sufferings objective through narration, *penthos* is therefore not concerned with *aletheia*. That which remains in the realm of *penthos* remains not remembered by society in general and, consequently, no one can ascertain whether it is true or not.

Odysseus becomes a truthful source of the past by transforming his sufferings into a story.<sup>14</sup> Before the transformation into *kleos*, *penthos* signals the world of ambiguity in which truth and false things can coexist. In fact, as long as Odysseus is “missing” no one can tell what is the true fate of Odysseus.

The *Odyssey* has been described as portraying a prolonged state of mourning. In the absence of Odysseus, the characters cannot go on with their normal lives, since they keep mourning for him.<sup>15</sup> While he is absent, Odysseus is part of old stories, but the definitive story of his fate does not yet exist. In Ithaca, Phemios can only sing about the return of the other Achaean heroes, but he does not have the knowledge of Odysseus’ fate. On the other hand, as Biles has noted, while Odysseus is absent from Phemios’ song there is still hope that he may be alive. Therefore, Telemachos goes in search of new stories about his father.<sup>16</sup> The state of mourning of Ithaca is equated with lack of knowledge about Odysseus. In this state no one can clearly distinguish the true from the false. As Eumaios later tells Odysseus (14.124–130) many people have come by trying to tell false stories (ψεῦδοντ’) to Penelope and are unwilling to tell the truth. This only makes her cry more. Throughout the *Odyssey* there is a distinct impression that sorrow and lack of knowledge about Odysseus are connected. While there is *penthos*, there cannot be truth, whereas the truth about Odysseus will come together with his *kleos*. Once there has been a process of narration, truth can be found, but not before. But *penthos* lies in the stage previous to truth, as it lies in a stage previous to *kleos*. Anything that remains in the realm of *penthos* is ambiguous from the point of view of the observer, who cannot ascertain the truth. Telemachos starts his trip in search of his father with the intention to break the

<sup>13</sup> Pratt (1993, 62–63) seems to contend that a truth cannot be narrated if it is not pleasant to hear.

<sup>14</sup> We only have his version of the story. The lack of competing versions makes his story truthful, although Odysseus himself is never given such an epithet; Roisman (1994, 10).

<sup>15</sup> Strauss-Clay 1983, 232.

<sup>16</sup> Biles 2003, 197.

continuous mourning that does not resolve his situation. As we will discover from the events in books 3 and 4, Menelaos is still in that stage of *penthos*, but not Nestor.

*Book 3: Nestor as speaker of kleos*

At the beginning of book 3 Mentor/Athena encourages Telemachos to ask frankly about his father. She describes Nestor as being full of intelligence and able to speak the truth (*Od.* 3.18–20):

εἶδομεν ἦν τινα μῆτιν ἐνὶ στήθεσσι κέκευθε.  
 λίσσεσθαι δέ μιν αὐτός, ὅπως νημερτέα εἴπῃ·  
 ψεῦδος δ' οὐκ ἔρει: μάλα γὰρ πεπνυμένος ἐστί.

We know which kind of intelligence lies hidden in his chest. You ask him to tell you unerring things. He will not tell a lie. For he is very inspired.

Nestor has *metis*, which belongs to the world of appearance and deceit<sup>17</sup> and consequently needs verification. The doubts concerning his truth are underlined by the fact that Nestor's *metis* is hidden inside of him.<sup>18</sup> Athena calms Telemachos' anxiety by assuring him that she knows what type of *metis* he has. Immediately after, Athena urges Telemachos to ask for the truth (*nemertea*). This is a truth verifiable (although mostly *a posteriori*) by the human intellect, which can decide whether or not the assertion has missed the mark.

But none of these reasons are sufficient for Telemachos, who needs the assurance from Athena that Nestor is in possession of another kind of truth as well, one that does not need verification. The fact that Nestor will not lie is connected with his inspiration: *pepnumenos* comes from πνέω –I breathe.<sup>19</sup> This is the same inspiration that poets receive from the Muses: Hesiod, *Theogony* 31–32:

... ἐνέπνευσαν δέ μοι αὐδὴν  
 θέσπιν, ἵνα κλείοιμι τὰ τ' ἐσσόμενα πρό τ' ἐόντα.

<sup>17</sup> Detienne 1999, 86.

<sup>18</sup> For *metis* as narration, cf. *Iliad* 9. 92–93—when they had put away the desire for food and drink the old man first started to weave his plan... *Metis* is hidden therefore needs revelation.

<sup>19</sup> Roisman (1994, 9) argues that *pepnumenos* implies sincerity and forwardness and is the opposite of telling lies.

They breathed into me a voice, divine, so that I might celebrate things to come and things that were.

Telling the truth in the case of Nestor is linked to his poetic inspiration. At the human level he is only characterized by *metis*, which does not exclude deceit. But the fact that he is inspired makes the truth that he speaks be understood as *kleos*. The act of poetic narration is, therefore, not only an act of creating the fame of a person, but also of conforming to the truth, of which the Muses are eyewitnesses. The speaker of *kleos* is at the same time a guarantor of truth.

Since the beginning of book 3 Nestor is characterized as if he were almost a Muse.<sup>20</sup> Nestor's equation with the Muses does not come from Athena's words alone. Telemachos presses Nestor to tell him the truth "the very way Homer confronts his Muses:"<sup>21</sup> 3.101—μοι νημερτὲς ἐνίσπες tell me the truth. Nestor himself uses expressions close to the poet's invocation to the Muses in the *Iliad*. In verses 3.113–116 Nestor comments on the many hardships the Greeks suffered at Troy:

... τίς κεν ἐκεῖνα  
πάντα γε μυθήσαιο καταθνητῶν ἀνθρώπων;  
οὐδ' εἰ πεντάετές γε καὶ ἐξάετες παραμίνων  
ἐξερέοις ὅσα κείθι πάθον κακὰ δῖοι Ἀχαιοί·

Who among mortal men would be able to tell all that? Not even if you were remembering for five or six years would you exhaust the narration of the many evil things that the godlike Achaeans suffered there.

Although in the previous verse and the following description of the selected events Nestor uses the inclusive first person plural (3.113 πάθομεν, 3.118 ῥάπτομεν), in this passage Nestor refers to the Achaeans in the third person, which indicates already a degree of objectivity in his role as poet. In addition, there are linguistic and structural elements shared with the invocation of the Muses in book 2 of the *Iliad*, v. 488–492:

πληθὺν δ' οὐκ ἂν ἐγὼ μυθήσομαι οὐδ' ὀνομήνω,  
οὐδ' εἴ μοι δέκα μὲν γλῶσσαι, δέκα δὲ στόματ' εἶεν,  
φωνὴ δ' ἄρρηκτος, χάλκεον δέ μοι ἦτορ ἐνείη,

<sup>20</sup> For the character of Nestor as praise poet see Martin 1989, 102.

<sup>21</sup> Biles 2003, 197.

εἰ μὴ Ὀλυμπιάδες Μοῦσαι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο  
θυγατέρες μνησαίαθ' ὅσοι ὑπὸ Ἴλιον ἦλθον·

I will not be able to narrate nor tell the multitude, not even if I had ten tongues or ten mouths and a non-fractured voice and a bronze heart within me, if not the Olympian Muses, daughters of Zeus aegis-bearer would remind me of as many people as went to Ilion.

In these two passages we can notice the repetition of verbs (μυθήσομαι, not quite repeated: παραμίνων, μνησαίαθ'), but more importantly the repetition of certain structural elements, such as the if-clause with the verb in optative mood and the two numerals, and the sentence introduced by the pronoun ὅσος. Nestor and the inspired poet underline the idea that their remembrance and ability to narrate the stories must come from a divine source, since mere human beings are not able to do so.

Nestor is in control of what is narrated. He does not spend five or six years relating all happenings at Troy, rather just short of a hundred verses. Therefore, Nestor selects what is to be remembered and by doing so he is the dispenser of truth. What he narrates is remembered and what he omits is lost forever. But his selection does not come entirely from him. He is inspired by the gods to make such a selection. This is clear in the second invocation to the Muses in *Iliad* 2.484–486.

ἔσπετε νῦν μοι Μοῦσαι Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχουσαι:  
ὑμεῖς γὰρ θεαὶ ἐστε πάρεστέ τε ἴστε τε πάντα,  
ἡμεῖς δὲ κλέος οἶον ἀκούομεν οὐδὲ τι ἴδμεν:

Tell me now Muses who have Olympian houses, for you are goddesses, you are present and know everything but we only hear the glory but do not know anything.

The Muses know what seems to be a preexistent glory while men are only able to hear it from them. Thus, glory has its origin among the gods. The poet attributes the ultimate responsibility of his narration to the Muses, he is a mere partial transmitter of all the knowledge of the Muses. What he narrates is *kleos* in its etymological sense—hearsay, but hearsay guaranteed by the Muses as eyewitnesses.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Finkelberg 1998, 72–73.

A further example of Nestor as (omniscient) poet is that he, like Homer, chooses to narrate the anger (μῆνις) of a character, this case Athena's. *Od.* 3.135–136:

μήνιος ἐξ ὀλοῆς γλαυκῶπιδος ὀβριμοπάτρης.  
ἦ τ' ἔριν Ἀτρεΐδῃσι μετ' ἀμφοτέροισιν ἔθηκε.

Because of the destructive wrath of the bright-eyed [Athena] whose father is mighty, which set strife between both Atreidai.

This is, of course, similar to the beginning of the *Iliad*, 1.1–2; 6–7:

μῆνιν ...  
οὐλομένην, ἣ μυρί' Ἀχαιοῖς ἄλγε' ἔθηκε,  
...διαστήτην ἐρίσαντε  
Ἀτρεΐδης τε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν καὶ δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς.

The wrath, destructive, which set thousands of pains to the Achaeans... and the two separated with a strife Atreides lord of men and godlike Achilles.

Once more, there is a similarity of vocabulary that identifies a similarity of intention. Nestor becomes a second Homer and the audience, both internal and external, is encouraged to accept his words without questioning. Nestor allows himself to make comments in the manner of an omniscient narrator. So in verse 3.146 he comments on Menelaos' actions referring to him as νήπιος—fool. These commentaries are put in place by the omniscient narrator to control and direct the narrative and express his self-consciousness.<sup>23</sup> Nestor, whose name is etymologically related to *nostos*, not only selects and controls the narrative with the prerogative of the inspired poet, but he also does not need to be sorrowful, since he has survived. Thus, the opposition *kleos/penthos* is resolved in Nestor, who becomes the ultimate truthful narrator, since he was an eyewitness to the events. His adventures at Troy and the return are part of his *kleos*.

#### *Book 4: Menelaos as speaker of penthos*

Contrary to the narration of Nestor, which is never questioned by the internal or external audiences after he is declared inspired, there are clues that indicate that

<sup>23</sup> Richardson 1990, 170–177.



the narratives of book 4 are less than trustworthy. The more important clue is the fact that the narratives are trapped in the world of *penthos* and do not move on to the *kleos*. Unlike the *kleos* that represents an objective truth, the *penthos* remains in ambiguity and it is up to the listener to choose which version can be true. Nevertheless, the different versions are presented as *aporia* more than as a positive process conducive to sorting out the truth from the false. This is implied in the stressing of the world of appearance.

The first clue given to the audience that the household of Menelaos rests in the ambiguous world of *penthos* is the name of Menelaos' bastard son, Megapenthes—"Big Sorrow," whose wedding and, correspondingly, his future descendants are then celebrated. It is common among Homeric heroes to name their children after the hero's most famous achievement. Hector's son is called Astyanax, because Hector is the one holding the city (*Iliad* 6.403). Menelaos sees himself as bringer of sorrow and names his son consequently. His greatest achievement disqualifies him as speaker of *kleos*, trustworthy narrator of past, and aligns him with singers of mourning.

In his narration Menelaos attempts to present himself as an alter-ego of Odysseus: he has suffered much, has wandered through many parts of the world and has seen paradise-like places in which the animals breed three times a year (4.81–89). Nevertheless, Menelaos remains in a constant state of mourning unable to make his sufferings objective through narration. At the beginning of book 9, when Odysseus reveals his own identity, he is first in a state of mourning—in fact, it is his crying that prompts Alcinoo's questioning. Odysseus also confesses that he cries in pain (9.13 ὀδυρόμενος στεναχίζω), but shortly after declares that his glory reaches to the skies (9.20 μεν κλέος οὐρανὸν ἵκει). The suffering of Odysseus is a portal to the narration of his glory.

On the contrary, the story of Menelaos centers on his blame. He blames himself for the death of his brother when he says that it occurred while he was wandering through several places (4.90–92). Therefore, even if he is king, he derives no pleasure from the riches he has amassed (4.93 ὥς οὗτοι χαίρων τοῖσδε κτεάτεσσιν ἀνάσσω). The discourse of blame finds its summit when he declares that he has destroyed the house of Atreus (4.95 ἀπώλεσα οἶκον), which would explain the name of his bastard son Megapenthes. Menelaos lives in constant self-reproach and remorse, lamenting frequently the death of his brother and companions (cf. 4.100 ὀδυρόμενος [mourning], 102 γόῳ φρένα τέρπομαι [I delight in my heart while wailing], 104 ὀδύρομαι [I mourn], ἀχνύμενός [grieving], 108 ἐμοὶ δ' ἄχος αἰὲν ἄλαστον [for me (there is) always an unforgettable pain]).

There are two narrative categories that are intertwined in Menelaos' narration. On the one hand, there is the discourse of blame and, on the other, the discourse of *penthos*. The intertwining is exemplified in the adjective *alaston*—"unforgettable." *Alaston* is etymologically related to *lethe*, and like *aletheia* is a negative derivation, but it applies only to contexts of blame.<sup>24</sup> Both of these categories (blame and *penthos*) are opposed to *kleos*, and, in principle, only *penthos* is also opposed to truth. Objective blame is not opposed to truth. Blame can also be remembered (*alethes/alaston*). However, it is the presence of *penthos* that makes Menelaos' remembrance at best ambiguous. Menelaos is not the objective destroyer of the house of Atreus. Helen, Agamemnon, Clytemnestra and Aigisthos all share the guilt of the demise. From the subjective point of view of Menelaos, nevertheless, the guilt lies in him and he is unable to separate his state of mourning from his auto-inculpation. Menelaos needs to rid himself of the *penthos* in order for the truth to emerge. This is when Helen intervenes.

When Telemachos bursts into tears and Menelaos is flustered about what to do, Helen makes her "triumphal" entrance and she asks: "Will I lie or will I tell the truth?" (4.140 ψεύσομαι ἢ ἔτυμον ἔρέω;). This question seems valid for all of Helen's intervention in book 4. Of course, the word that she uses for the truth is *etumon*, and not *alethes*, because as seen before *alethes* depends on the narration of *kleos*, which she attempts to avoid, fearing that her own *kleos* would be more a discourse of blame than glory.

After the visitors' identity has been revealed and everybody cries for a short while, the son of Nestor makes a first step in attributing to Menelaos the ability to produce *kleos* by calling him "inspired" (4.190 πεπνυμένον). Peisistratos also declares his lack of enjoyment of mourning (4.193–194 οὐ γὰρ ἐγὼ γε / τέρπομ' ὀδυρόμενος). These short assertions of Nestor's son are the first attempts to break with the cycle of *penthos* and substitute it with *kleos*, which will bring out the truth of what happened at Troy. Menelaos seems to agree on the breaking of the cycle of *penthos* and returns the compliments to Peisistratos, whom he also qualifies as inspired and speaking inspired things (4.204 πεπνυμένος, 4.206 πεπνυμένα). Furthermore, Menelaos agrees on letting go of the lamentation, if only for a while (4.212 κλαυθμὸν μὲν ἔασομεν).

Then Helen intervenes a second time. Why does she pour the drug in the wine when it has been agreed upon leaving the *penthos* behind? What can drive her to obstruct the perception of what is about to be told? Interestingly enough, scholars do not seem to notice that Menelaos is willing to stop the lamentation and Helen is not trying to save the situation, but to stop the narration, which has been agreed to be resumed on the next morning. Scholars tend to explain Hel-

<sup>24</sup> Nagy 1999, 95–96.

en's intervention as an attempt to come out of the impasse,<sup>25</sup> but I think this interpretation is hardly tenable in light of the speaker's character and the dubious nature of her tale itself.<sup>26</sup> Helen does not want to leave the world of ambiguity. She is opposed to the examination of versions that would result in *kleos*.

We can see this by the way the drug is described. The drug is described in 4.221 as νηπενθές τ' ἄχολον—without *penthos* and without anger. Further, it is also described in the same verse as ἐπιλήθον—causing *lethe*, forgetfulness. Its effects are so powerful that a person would not react even if seeing his parents being killed in front of him. The *penthos* that the drug stops comes from a numbing of the senses, not from having transformed the personal sufferings into objective *kleos*.<sup>27</sup> In that sense the drug is doubly opposed to *kleos*. First, because it brings forgetfulness and second because it does not allow the *penthos* to stop naturally. In both instances, the drug aborts narration. In a culture where the truth is determined often as a memory from a firsthand witness, forgetfulness is not a virtue and can often constitute a danger for one person's true identity.<sup>28</sup> Helen's intentions of bringing forgetfulness cannot be applauded as an attempt to save a difficult situation in relation to her guests.

In 4.230 the drugs that the Egyptian queen gave Helen are said to be some good and some bad. There is, consequently, an ambiguity about the drug that Helen has poured into the wine. The drug is as well described as μητιόεντα—“possessing *metis*” in 4.227. This is an unusual epithet for the drug, since it is usually an epithet of Zeus. The transferring of qualities must be significant. It makes us think that the drug is in fact full of uncertainty and perhaps even deceit. Helen, through the drug, wants to assume the role of Zeus in determining what is to be remembered and what not.<sup>29</sup> Helen appears, consequently, as inflictor of forgetfulness and ambiguity. She does not allow the *kleos* and the truth to advance.

When she starts her narration of Odysseus' infiltration in Troy, a fact that is only known to her, she asserts that she is going to tell the story in a “fitting” manner (4.239 εὐκότα γὰρ καταλέξω); εὐκότα refers to something that is plausible and likely, but not necessarily true. Helen also says that she is not going to retell the whole story, but only part of it (4.240 πάντα μὲν οὐκ ἂν ἐγὼ

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Olson 1989, 387.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Olson 1989, 389: “her subsequent ministrations to ‘the beggar’s’ apparent needs have the practical effect of destroying the disguise.”

<sup>27</sup> Hesiod *Theogony* 98–102: If someone with a grief laments anew in his spirit...then a poet, a servant of the Muses, will sing the glories of earlier men...and he, who was heavy hearted, forgets (ἐπιλήθεται) and does not remember (οὐδέ...μémνηται) any sorrows.

<sup>28</sup> Parry 1994, 10.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Hesiod *Works and Days* 3–8.

μυθήσομαι οὐδ' ὀνομήνω). Like Nestor and the external narrator, Helen attempts to control the narration and place herself as speaker of *kleos*. The selection of the story, nevertheless, stems directly from her, not from the Muses. When Nestor or the external narrator asked the rhetorical question: “who could narrate the events if not a god?” they are implying they are the transmitters of the gods. Helen’s selection, on the contrary, is entirely human. In order to emphasize her selection, she contrasts the Trojans sorrow (4.259 Τρωαὶ λίγ' ἐκώκυον) with her own joy (4.259–260 ἐμὸν κῆρ / χαῖρ').

There are doubts about Helen’s tale not only because hers is an “uncorroborated memory,”<sup>30</sup> but mostly because Helen departs in three aspects from the previous concept of truthful narration. Firstly, she does not retell the sorrow, but the joy. Secondly, she declares her intention of not retelling point-to-point the exploits (4.241 ἄεθλοι)—not the sufferings—of Odysseus. And thirdly, she will tell the story in a fitting manner, meeting “the artistic and social expectations of the listeners,” but without implying truth.<sup>31</sup> These three aspects of Helen narration combine to introduce what Finkelberg calls “poetics of fiction.”<sup>32</sup>

Since *Odyssey* 4.239 alters a traditional formula in which the verb καταλέγω is associated always with the truth, Finkelberg marks this passage as “programmatic statement signaling a break with the traditional attitude to epic narrative.”<sup>33</sup> This passage would imply the development of new poetical practice, that of the “poetics of fiction.”

I agree with Finkelberg that Helen has a different understanding of poetic creation than Nestor or the external narrator. She considers herself the ultimate creator of her story, and does not feel responsible for telling the truth. I would, nevertheless, not call this instance a break with the previous poetic practice. Homeric narrative offers the option of lying and creation of fictional stories. Odysseus does so frequently. In *Odyssey* 19.203, Odysseus is described like the Hesiodic Muses as someone who can tell many lies that resemble truths (ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγων ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα). Helen can present her plausible story because the concept of truth is not given as an absolute but is a secondary concept, dependent on that of remembrance through narration. Thus, from a human point of view, what constitutes truth is open to debate and examination.

<sup>30</sup> Parry 1994, 8.

<sup>31</sup> Emlyn-Jones 1986, 1.

<sup>32</sup> Finkelberg 1998, 68f.

<sup>33</sup> Finkelberg 1998, 150.

Determining the truth is important for the Homeric characters. That is why characters quiz their interlocutors and demand constant reassurance that they are telling the truth.<sup>34</sup> But even they might not always be able to recognize it. In spite of Helen's "fictional" tale, for her husband she has hit the mark. Therefore, Menelaos responds that she has spoken according to the norm (4.266 κατὰ μοῖραν ἔειπες). This is an expression equivalent to telling the truth.<sup>35</sup> We have to be reminded here, however, that Menelaos, Telemachos and Peisistratos are under the effect of the drug. It is not clear from the text whether Helen has also drunk it or not. Any agreement on the part of Menelaos may not correspond with his true feelings. In any case, the drug has contributed to pass as *kleos* something that did not claim to be true from the start.

Menelaos' tale will not have the same outcome. Menelaos was described by Nestor at the end of book 3 (327–328) with almost the same verses as Nestor was described by Athena in 3.18–20:

λίσσεσθαι δέ μιν αὐτός, ὅπως νημερτέα εἴπῃ:  
ψευδός δ' οὐκ ἐρέει: μάλα γὰρ πεπνυμένος ἐστί.

Ask him to tell you the truth. He will not say a lie, for he is very inspired.

This description alone should suffice for his tale to be regarded as truthful. In fact, we are left with the impression that his description of the events at Troy is more accurate than Helen's. However, in 8.500–520 Demodocos does not mention any of these events in his tale of the Trojan Horse. Menelaos remembers how when the Greeks were hiding inside the wooden horse, Helen called the Greek warriors out by imitating their wives' voices. Odysseus restrained Antiklos—"Anti-glory" from coming out and thereby obtained glory for the Greeks (4.271–289). Had Helen been successful, "anti-glory" would have resulted. But even if she was not successful, "anti-glory," i.e. blame and ambiguity has been attached to her.

Through his narration, Menelaos attempts to associate Helen with the lies involved in the "anti-glory." However, since blame and *penthos* are connected in the discourse of Menelaos at the beginning of book 4, this story that blames Helen is also unable to break with the *penthos*. The inspired Telemachos (4.290 πεπνυμένος) replies to the story of Menelaos that this is even more painful (4.292 ἄλγιον), since none of his father's achievements kept destruction from

<sup>34</sup> Parry 1994, 6–7.

<sup>35</sup> Finkelberg 1998, 127–129.

him. Telemachos reverts Menelaos' narration to the domain of *penthos*. At least for the night.

The drug and Helen's deceit have accomplished a reversal in the categories of truth and ambiguity, *kleos* and *penthos*. What is presented as ambiguous is recognized as true and what should have been accepted as truth due to the inspired character of the speaker is presented as not having achieved *kleos* and being more painful. The contrasting stories of Helen and Menelaos represent the triumph of human intellect over divine inspiration. The poetics of plausibility take precedence over the poetics of truth.

On the next morning and, presumably, after the effects of the drug are over, Menelaos and Telemachos request from each other assurance that they are telling the truth. First, Menelaos asks Telemachos why he came to Sparta and encourages him to answer with the truth (4.314 νημερτὲς). Then, Telemachos also demands the same kind of response (4.331 νημερτὲς) to his entreaties to Menelaos to tell him whether he was an eyewitness to his father's destruction (4.323–324 ὄπωπας / ὀφθαλμοῖσι τεοῖσιν, 4.327 ὀπωπῆς). Menelaos' reputation as inspired by the gods is no longer sufficient for Telemachos, who now demands firsthand testimony. Thus, Telemachos sheds a doubt in Menelaos' ability to be a speaker of *kleos*.

The failure to break from *penthos*, be it because of the drug or because of the listener not trusting the speaker completely, leaves both Helen's and Menelaos' tales within the realm of ambiguity. Helen tried through her story to present herself as helper of the Greeks, but her help is rather peculiar.<sup>36</sup> Menelaos tried to blame Helen through his tale. Although he managed to do so, nevertheless, this implied casting a doubt on his own ability of being a speaker of *kleos*, since his discourse was characterized at the beginning as a combination of *penthos* and blame.

Books 3 and 4 of the *Odyssey* present two different ways of understanding the truth. Whereas in book 3 Nestor is described as an inspired speaker and therefore in contact with the gods who transmit the truth, in book 4, Helen is presented as being the originator of her own story. She deploys human intellect to create a story and thus there cannot be an assurance of its truth. Also, Menelaos is unable to break from the *penthos* previous to the result of *kleos* and, consequently, his story is not accepted as entirely true either. The stories of Helen and Menelaos represent a struggle for truth. They are in a phase in which truth needs to be uncovered, but the characters involved in the episode, specifically Telemachos, are not yet able to resolve it.

<sup>36</sup> Olson 1989, 389.

### *References*

- Biles, Z. (2003), "Perils of Song in Homer's *Odyssey*," *Phoenix* 57. 3–4: 191–208.
- Bowie, E. L. (1993), "Lies, Fiction and Slander in Early Greek Poetry" in: *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World*, ed. C. Gill & T. P. Wiseman, Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1–37.
- Cole, T. (1983), "Archaic Truth," *QUCC* 13: 7–28.
- Detienne, M. (1999), *The Masters of Truth in Archaic Greece*, (English Trans.) New York: Zone Books.
- Emlyn-Jones, C. (1986), "True and Lying Tales in the *Odyssey*," *Greece and Rome*, 33(2): 1–10.
- Finkelberg, M. (1998), *The Birth of Literary Fiction in Ancient Greece*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Fränkel, H. (1962), *Early Greek Poetry and Philosophy. A History of Greek Epic, Lyric, and Prose to the Middle of the Fifth Century*. New York - London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich
- Heitsch, E. (1963), "Wahrheit als Erinnerung," *Hermes* 91: 36–52.
- Krischer, T. (1965), "Ἔτοςμος und ἀληθής," *Philologus* 109: 161–174.
- Martin, R. (1989), *The Language of Heroes: Speech and Performance in the Iliad*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Nagy, G. (1999), *The Best of the Achaeans. Concepts of the Hero in Archaic Greek Poetry*, Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Olson, S.D. (1989), "The Stories of Helen and Menelaus (*Odyssey* 4.240–89) and the Return of Odysseus," *AJPh* 110.3: 387–394
- Parry, H. (1994), "The Apologos of Odysseus: Lies, all Lies?" *Phoenix* 48.1: 1–20.
- Pratt, L. H. (1993), *Lying and Poetry from Homer to Pindar. Falsehood and Deception in Archaic Greek Poetics*, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.
- Richardson, S. (1990), *The Homeric Narrator*, Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press.
- Roisman, H. M. (1994), "Like Father like Son; Telemachus' KERDEA," *Rheinisches Museum* 137: 1–22.
- Schmiel, R. (1972), "Telemachus in Sparta," *TAPhA* 103: 463–472.
- Segal, C. (1983), "Kleos and its Ironies in the *Odyssey*," *AC* 52: 22–47.
- Strauss-Clay, J. (1983), *The Wrath of Athena: Gods and Men in the Odyssey*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.





# The Trojan War: Between History and Myth

VALENTINA PROSPERI  
University of Sassari

At the end of a masterly account of the historical and archaeological evidence in our possession today on the Trojan War, Martin L. West thus concludes:

The Trojan War, then, remains in the end a mythical war. We lack the document that would bring it into the realm of history, it lies just off the edge of the screen. So for the time being we must content ourselves with the myth. Fortunately it is one of the best.<sup>1</sup>

Such a considered assessment of where the Trojan War stands today (“just off the edge of the screen”), in terms of generic status, comes as a final and authoritative declaration after millennia of uncertainty and debate, even as our ongoing fascination with the Trojan *story* (to use for now a noncommittal word) shows no signs of relenting.<sup>2</sup>

And yet, positioning the Trojan War exactly between history and myth requires us as readers to share a basic notion of what exactly myths and history are, and in how they can be differentiated from each other. After all, it is undeniable that, as close as they might sometimes appear, “our common parlance reckons myth to be false while history is, or aspires to be, true.”<sup>3</sup> According to the scholar just quoted, any pretense to absolute Truth that historians may have is intrinsically doomed, and all we can rely upon—bar some rather ineffectual evolutionary progress—is in fact—Mythistory:

---

<sup>1</sup> West 2011b, 112.

<sup>2</sup> Solomon 2007.

<sup>3</sup> McNeill 1986, 1.

Still, what seems wise and true to me seems irrelevant obfuscation to others. Only time can settle the issue, presumably by outmoding my ideas and my critics as well. Unalterable and eternal Truth remains like the Kingdom of Heaven, an eschatological hope. Mythistory is what we actually have—a useful instrument for piloting human groups in their encounters with one another and with the natural environment.<sup>4</sup>

However, it can be argued that such agnostic resignation in face of the unattainability of Truth with a capital T has never seemed to get in the way of historians from trying their hand at it: thus the question remains as to how to discern history proper from myth.<sup>5</sup> We may turn to West's line of reasoning again, concerned as it is with all matters Trojan.

A firm chronological framework is a precondition for the writing of history; it is not much use establishing that this and that once happened if one does not know when they happened, in what sequence, at what intervals, in what context. We expect of history not only truth but precision: precise location in time and space, the names of the persons involved, and so forth.<sup>6</sup>

Well, there was a time in Western civilization, neither long past nor brief, when the finest details of the Trojan War were laid out in sound historical documents for anyone to read.

The Trojans...rushed from the gates along with their allies and made an attack. Their forces were arranged in the plain in two divisions: Hector was leading the Trojans, Sarpedon the allies.

When we saw them ready for attack, we armed ourselves and, forming an unbroken line of defence, drew up our forces to meet them. Achilles and Antilochus led our right wing; Ajax the son of Telamon and Diomedes led the left; and the other Ajax and Idomeneus, my leader, led the center.<sup>7</sup>

On the next day Achilles and Diomedes led forth their army. The forces of Hector and Aeneas came opposite. A great slaughter arose. Hector slew the leaders Orcomenus, Ialmenus, Epistrophus, Schedius, Elephenor, Diores and Polyxenus. Aeneas slew Amphinomachus and Nireus. Achilles slew Eu-

---

<sup>4</sup> McNeill 1986, 10.

<sup>5</sup> See what Momigliano (1984b, 74; 1984c) says on the ambiguous link between history and rhetoric.

<sup>6</sup> West 2011b, 97.

<sup>7</sup> Dictys I.32, trans. Frazer 1966, 56.

phemus, Hippothous, Pylaeus, and Asteropaeus. And Diomedes slew Antiphus and Mesthles.<sup>8</sup>

In terms of the requirements listed by West, what is missing from these descriptions of Trojan battle scenes? We are regaled with names, locations, details that are precise in the extreme. And as for the chronological framework: *the facts described are contemporary with their own description*.

What I have just quoted above are in fact excerpts from the two Latin texts long believed to be direct recordings of the Trojan war: *Ephemeris belli Troiani*, circulating under the name of Dictys the Cretan, and *De excidio Troiae historia*, by Dares the Phrygian. These texts are familiar to scholars of classical and medieval civilization; less so perhaps, to scholars of the early modern world, where their influence was however just as widespread and conquered ever more territories, to the point of challenging the *redivivus* Homer in the Humanism.<sup>9</sup>

### *The original context*

Although the importance of these two texts relies on how they were received by their readers and not on their original circumstances or literary quality, it is all the more important to assess their initial context. Dictys and Dares belong to the age of the Second Sophistic, a literary movement that has been receiving increasing critical attention in recent years.

However, given their ambiguous form (on which more later), their anonymity, their language (Latin, the Greek originals being almost completely lost),<sup>10</sup> Dictys and Dares are yet to receive a proper reassessment as fictional texts. The proof is, that all recent general discussions of ancient narrative, either ignore them or relegate them to an undefined grey area between fiction and—

<sup>8</sup> Dares 21, trans. Frazer 1966, 150–151.

<sup>9</sup> Clark 2011 on Dares.

<sup>10</sup> Only fragments of the Greek Dictys survive: *PTeb* 268, (also reproduced in Eisenhut 1958, 134–139); *POxy.* 2539; *P.Oxy.* 4943; *POxy.* 4944. See Hatzilambrou and Obbink 2009; Gainsford 2012, 65–74 for a comprehensive list of witnesses to Dictys. The question of the Greek original of Dares is still debated: Stenger 2005 denies its existence; Bornmann 1987 supports the view of a Greek lost original, although pointing out how late sources purporting to have seen the Greek text of Dares should not be trusted; Beschorner (1992) underlines the elements in favor of the Greek original; for a recent assessment of the scholarship on the question: Garbugino 2011, 6–14.

something else.<sup>11</sup> This is all the more striking if we look at the general fervor of critical studies that have been invested in Second Sophistic texts in general.

Long dismissed as mere *divertissements*, Second Sophistic texts such as Lucian's *True Histories*, Philostratus' *Heroicus*, Antonius Diogenes' *The Wonders beyond Thule*, Dio of Pruse's *Trojan Oration* and others, are now the focus of a new narratological perspective. According to the new critical approach, these texts share an overt literary complexity, aimed, as it were, at emphasizing and problematizing the "triangular" author-reader-text relationship. In other words, these texts are forever testing the limits of the ideal contract between author and reader, in which the former endeavors to accomplish "a fictional world that is sufficiently plausible, either by virtue of its relatable similarity to the extra-diegetic world shared by author and reader or else by virtue of its own inherent logic."<sup>12</sup> All these texts share a certain unreliability that ranges from minimal (as in Achilles Tatius' *Leucippe and Clitophon*) to maximal (*True Histories*).<sup>13</sup>

### *Pseudo-documentarism*

Within this kind of literary production, a sub-genre has now been identified: namely pseudo-documentarism, which includes all those texts that have their authority rely on external—fictive—sources that are purported to be true. According to the coiner of this term, pseudo-documentarism is "an author's untrue allegation that he (or she) has come upon an authentic document of some sort that he (or she) is drawing upon or passing on to his (her) readers."<sup>14</sup>

Dictys and Dares fit perfectly into the pseudo-documentarism genre, given the fact that they both adopt the self-validating device of presenting their sources as authentic documents fortuitously preserved after centuries of oblivion. Can we then rescue Dictys and Dares from the limbo of the last two centuries that

<sup>11</sup> Their ambiguous generic status is apparent in the latest scholarship on the ancient narrative: apart from the recent studies on pseudo-documentarism, Dictys and Dares have always "floated" in a critical limbo that excludes them without uncertainties from the realm of history but hesitates to include them among narrative texts. Merkle (1989, 293–305) thoroughly discusses the options for Dictys, only to conclude that the text is neither fish nor fowl; see also the *Introduction* in Tatum (1994, 10–11); the volume edited by Schmeling (1996) confines Dictys and Dares in a section called *Novel-like works of extended prose-fiction*, whereas Holzberg (1996, 16) reinforces their uncertain characterization.

<sup>12</sup> Ni Mheallaigh 2008, 403.

<sup>13</sup> Whitmarsh, 2011, 85.

<sup>14</sup> Hansen 2003, 302.

expelled them from the realms of history and fiction alike, and give them a new generic status as pseudo-documentary texts? I doubt it. At the very least, this new assessment needs qualification, given the fact that, unlike all the other pseudo-documentary texts, Dictys and Dares actually succeeded in passing off their work as a recounting of history—and not merely occasionally, but consistently so over many centuries. This is the extraordinary aspect of the otherwise all too ordinary Dictys and Dares: they did not simply have an impact on the post-classic circulation of the Trojan Myth. They controlled it: throughout the Middle Ages, Humanism, and the Renaissance. They pushed their self-assurance to the point of challenging the revived Homer, managing to get the better of him well into the 16th century. As hard to believe as it might seem, their reputation showed its first cracks only in the 17th century, but even in the 19th century they occasionally came back into fashion.<sup>15</sup>

If we compare Dictys and Dares to other pseudo-documentary texts of the same period, their singularity stands out even more. Predictably, readers have never taken Lucian's self-confessedly fictional *True Histories* at face value; however, readers have not placed much trust either in texts that take a more ambivalent stance as to their documentary status: Philostratus' *Heroicus*,<sup>16</sup> Dio of Pruse's *Trojan Oration*. It is true that, unlike other, better fruits of the Second Sophistic, Dictys and Dares benefited from an early Latin translation. But it would be wrong to pinpoint the translation as the *cause* of their success. In fact the translation was the first, disrupting *consequence* of their success, of their being perceived as historians. Another critical juncture in their reception was their being recognized as historians in Patristic texts.<sup>17</sup> Undoubtedly, the Church fathers worked as a formidable spring-board for Dictys and Dares' subsequent reception. But, again, this fact must be taken as consequence, not as cause of their unique success.

This is then the core of the question: how did Dictys and Dares even join the realm of historians? Where and what is this quintessential quality of theirs that enabled them to be promoted from fiction to history, and from history to primary, inevitable sources on the Trojan War for many centuries? I put forward the idea right at the beginning that Dictys and Dares would comply perfectly with the definition of historical truth advanced by West. Still, we could object that West's definition is somewhat general and loose, and therefore not the best test

<sup>15</sup> Prosperi 2013, chaps. 1, 3.

<sup>16</sup> Philostratus' *Heroicus* is especially perceived as akin to Dictys and Dares, as part of a corpus where "ancient readers were treated to claims of a truer and more accurate account of the Trojan War—truer even than the version they were used to reading in the epic poetry of Homeric *Iliad* and *Odyssey*," Dué and Nagy 2003, 3.

<sup>17</sup> On Dictys and Dares and their long career as Fathers of history see Momigliano 1960.

bench or starting point for discussion. But I contend that, even if we went looking for a more stringent definition of what is required from history, of what it takes for an account to be historical, we would not be disappointed by Dictys and Dares.

First of all, Dictys and Dares' purported autopsy of the events they narrate has always been pinpointed (and rightly so) as key to their lasting reputation. In fact, both of them enact the kind of historiographical rhetoric that is proper to classical Greek historiography:<sup>18</sup> they claim to report only what they have been witness to and they are careful to fill in occasional gaps by referring the reader to trustworthy sources.<sup>19</sup>

Early modern readers were quick to pick up this trait as proof of Dictys and Dares' trustworthiness: Dictys only wrote "ea quae vidit, quibus interfuit, quae gessit," as the first critical editor of the texts claimed.<sup>20</sup> And subsequent humanists dealing with the Trojan War never failed to refer their readers to Dictys and Dares as superior sources to the "fictional" Homer.<sup>21</sup> Nonetheless, claiming direct knowledge of the intervened facts would have not been enough to convince readers of the soundness of what they read: after all, texts such as Philostratus' *Heroicus* claimed to be autoptical but never made it as historical texts.

In the pages that follow I will try to demonstrate the consistency of the Dictys and Dares' texts not only with what their immediate readers identified as history, but with history as we still think of it. This will help clarify one of the

<sup>18</sup> On the topos of autopsy in classical Greek historiography: Nenci 1955; Momigliano 1984a.

<sup>19</sup> See for instance Dictys I.13 "I followed along with these. As to what happened earlier in Troy, I have tried to make my report as accurate as possible, Ulysses being my source. The account that follows, based as it is on my own observations, will meet, I hope, the highest critical standards" (trans. Frazer 1966, 30). Dares 12: "Dares the Phrygian, who wrote this history, says that he did military service until the capture of Troy and saw the people listed below either during times of truce or while he was fighting. As for Castor and Pollux, he learned from the Trojans what they were like and how they looked." (trans. Frazer 1966, 142).

<sup>20</sup> Faraone 1499, prefatory letter to Bernardino Rizzo.

<sup>21</sup> See for instance Volaterrano 1530, 170r on Dares: "Dares Phrygius historicus scripsit bellum Trojanum Graece, in quo ipse militavit, ut ait Isidorus, primus fere historicorum, qui tandem capto illo cum Anthenoris factione remansit, scribit Cornelius Nepos, qui opus ejus sex libris e graeco convertit dicavitque Crispo Sallustio"; 174r on Dictys: "Dictys Cretensis peritus Phoenicum literarum, natus Merione filio Idomenei, scripsit bellum Troianum, in quo ipse militavit, Phoenicum lingua (...)." The historian Tarcagnola (1585, 91) on the two's superiority over Homer: "Della guerra di Troia scrisse Omero nel poema: ma perciocche egli va poeticamente le battaglie scrivendo co' suoi tanti iddii, e molte volte narra altrimenti le cose di quello, che Darete Frigio si fa; non bisogna, che noi altrimenti vi entriamo."

most baffling and often overlooked phenomena in Western classical reception: how the Myth of Troy survived and flourished in Europe despite Homer's disappearance but feeding, instead, on these two fictional texts. In order to do so, I will turn to one of today's most sustained philosophical theories on historical truth, which is Bernard Williams' essay on *Truth and Truthfulness*, a text that has the further advantage of dealing directly with the *primordia* of Greek historiography.

As a culture, we generally agree that Herodotus albeit tentatively, and then Thucydides, definitively, founded the very genre of the modern historical narration. This achievement depends, in Bernard Williams' analysis, on the unfailing application to the past of a new, revolutionary criterion: the *explanatory requirement*. This requirement implies "that people should extend to the remoter past a practice they already had in relation to the immediate past, of treating what was said about it as, seriously, true or false,"<sup>22</sup> or, to put it another way, if something happened in the past, no matter how remote, at some level of generality that sort of thing must still make sense.

In Williams' view, Herodotus still largely relies on the *traditional* practice of his age: that is he refrains from declaring events from the remoter past as true or false. Nevertheless, he shows clear signs of unease whenever he defaults to the traditional practice, as is apparent in his treatment of Minos. To Herodotus, Minos lies exactly where the Trojan War lies to us: in the no man's land between history and myth. Minos lived two generations before the War of Troy (*Hist.* VII.171.1): this is as much Herodotus knows about him, but in fact Minos cannot be discussed as he does not belong to "what is called the human race" (III.122.2):<sup>23</sup> that is, he is a creature of myth. On the other hand, Thucydides is the first to apply with unfailing consistency the explanatory requirement to events previously assigned to the realm of myth. Indeed, in the so-called *Archaeology* that opens his oeuvre, Thucydides "interprets the explanatory requirement in a very strong way,"<sup>24</sup> rationalizing precisely that part of the remoter past that hinged on the Trojan War.

In the Hellenistic age to which the original Dictys and Dares belonged, we witness a return to the pre-Thucydidean practice, which certainly reflects, as Emilio Gabba pointed out, a change in the audience's perspective and expectations. But this was an artificial reversal of things, and one that did not efface the advancements made by classical historiography. Hence two reactions: on the one hand, the mingling of history and myth *within historiography* raised the

<sup>22</sup> Williams 2002, 163.

<sup>23</sup> Williams 2002, 161.

<sup>24</sup> Williams 2002, 167; Asheri 1988, XXXVI ff.

reprobation and spurn of leading intellectuals such as Lucian.<sup>25</sup> On the other hand, those same intellectuals (notably Lucian) often adopted the same generic mixture to experiment within other, *fictional* literary genres.

I am not going to tackle the problem of the origins of the novel, nor the question of its link with this kind of Hellenistic historiography.<sup>26</sup> What I think we can take as given though, is that the conscious and artificial return to a kind of traditional, myth-infused narrative practice was adopted by leading authors and intellectuals (Philostratus, Lucian, Dio Chrysostom, and Antonius Diogenes) not because they were “naively” convinced of the historiographical legitimacy of such a practice, but because they aspired to explore the intersections and mutual boundaries between history and fiction.

A Second Sophistic text that perfectly embodies this kind of conscious reflection on the status of fiction is Lucian’s *True Histories*, where narrative conventions are laid bare by reversing them. Instead of framing his narrative with validating paratexts, Lucian exposes it as a lie, thus forcing his readers to be fully conscious of the text’s fictionality.

Now I am myself vain enough to cherish the hope of bequeathing something to posterity; I see no reason for resigning my right to that inventive freedom which others enjoy; and, as I have no truth to put on record, having lived a very humdrum life, I fall back on falsehood — but falsehood of a more consistent variety; for I now make the only true statement you are to expect — that I am a liar. This confession is, I consider, a full defence against all imputations. My subject is, then, what I have neither seen, experienced, nor been told, what neither exists nor could conceivably do so. I humbly solicit my readers’ incredulity.<sup>27</sup>

As Massimo Fusillo has pointed out, Lucian’s argument is not against fiction, but against fiction disguised as an actual record of true experiences.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Canfora 1999, 290–326; Ligota 2007, 55: Lucian excludes “historical occurrences from the otherwise all-powerful play of language. This amounts to a structural differentiation of historical reality from fiction that is stronger than any normative one, and is all the more significant for being made, as it were, from the side of fiction. It is what is beyond the reach of the ποιητής.”

<sup>26</sup> On the relationship between the ancient novel and historiography see Schwartz 1896, discussed in Perry 1967, 37; Fusillo (1989) recognises in historiography one of the inter-textual models of the ancient novel but denies that the former might have brought about the latter.

<sup>27</sup> Lucian, *True History*, 1.4 (trans. Fowler and Fowler 2009).

<sup>28</sup> Fusillo 1988, 110. See also Georgiadou and Larmour 1998, 3.



To sum up the question then, Hellenistic historiographical practice did not erase or surpass the achievements of classical historiography, nor were readers more prone in Hellenistic times to believe in ambiguous narratives that mingled myth and history.

*Homer and the Trojan War in Herodotus and Thucydides*

Given the general picture then, it is not by chance that so much of the Second Sophistic production seems to be obsessed by confronting Homer,<sup>29</sup> and especially with the Trojan War. Hellenistic imagination perceived the Trojan conflict as a historical event, of which the Homeric poem was the attractive and unfaithful poetic, *fictional* adaptation.<sup>30</sup> Hence, on the one hand, the mass of texts in playful dialogue with Homer's *Iliad*; and on the other, a shared acceptance of the Trojan War's historical status.

This attitude had its roots in Herodotus and Thucydides. If on the one hand Thucydides considers Homer overall as an informed chronicler of the remotest past and recognizes him, albeit begrudgingly, as a predecessor,<sup>31</sup> on the other Herodotus singled out the Trojan War as a veritable case study of the difference between *μῦθος* and *ιστορία*.<sup>32</sup> It is in a passage of the *Histories* (II.113–115) that Herodotus questions the very basis Homer had given as the reason for the Trojan War, that is Helen's abduction by Paris.<sup>33</sup> The reasons put forward by Herodotus to deny Homer's version are twofold: reliability of the sources and compliance of the events narrated with the "explanatory requirement."

This, by what the priests told me, was the manner of Helen's coming to Proteus. And, to my thinking, Homer too knew this story; but seeing that it suited not so well with epic poetry as the tale of which he made use, he rejected it of set purpose, showing withal that he knew it... So much was told me by the Egyptian priests. For myself, I believe their story about Helen: for I reason thus—that had Helen been in Ilion, then with or without the will of

<sup>29</sup> Kim 2010.

<sup>30</sup> Erskine 2001.

<sup>31</sup> Strasburger 1979, 18.

<sup>32</sup> For the theoretical backdrop of this reading of Herodotus: Williams 2002, 149ff., 161. For a commentary to Herodotus and a first bibliographical introduction: Lloyd 1975a, 1975b, 1988.

<sup>33</sup> Marincola 2006, 22. Moreover, in *Hist.* I. 5.3, Herodotus voices his mistrust of the diverging accounts regarding Helen's abduction from Sparta: he refuses to take sides and will begin from the first character he *knows* about (Corcella 1984, 61).

Alexandrus she would have been given back to the Greeks. For surely neither was Priam so mad, nor those nearest to him, as to consent to risk their own persons and their children and their city, that Alexandrus might have Helen to wife.<sup>34</sup>

To explain his preference for this version of the story—well circulated in antiquity and a theme for Euripides' *Helen*<sup>35</sup>—Herodotus advances ideas clearly dictated by the explanatory requirement (II.120). Herodotus clarifies that Homer had to take his audience and what was “appropriate” for them into account,<sup>36</sup> but still, Herodotus' reasoning goes, there is no possible rationale for the Trojans to have held Helen at the price of the war and the slaughter of their people: as we would say—it just doesn't make sense. Hence, Herodotus' preference for the Egyptian version of the story.<sup>37</sup>

### *Homeric Discourse in Dictys and Dares*

As they set out to produce typical Second-Sophistic, Homer-centered texts, Dictys and Dares however took a peculiar narrative stance that had a number of unpredicted outcomes. First of all, there was the choice of the narrating personae: Dictys and Dares, soldiers from the Greek and Trojan army, are fictitious names; but the actual authors' names are completely unknown, and do not emerge either from contemporary texts presumably related to them, such as Philostratus' *Heroicus*, nor from later sources. This complete obliteration of the narrators' identity behind their narrating personae gave the texts, which present themselves as daily journals, an immediate authenticity, much as it happened, famously, for Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, where the actual author's name did not appear in first editions and led readers for a long time to believe the novel was an authentic report of adventures. Dictys (and to a lesser degree

<sup>34</sup> Loeb Translation: A. D. Godley 1966

<sup>35</sup> On Euripides' *Helen*: West 2011a; Allan 2008, 18–28; Wright 2005, 89 ff; Austin 1994; Ligota 1982.

<sup>36</sup> On Herodotus' consciousness of the different styles pertaining to different audiences: Boedeker 2000, 104–105: “What is important here is not simply that Herodotus disagrees with Homer, but why he does so. Herodotus maintains that Homer was compelled for generic reasons to tell the story as he did: as a poet he had, so to speak, a different “narrative contract” with his audience. The Helen passage, although unique in its explicitness, indicates very clearly that Herodotus attributes an important difference in narrative motives to different kinds of accounts.”

<sup>37</sup> Cfr. Lloyd 1975a, 162–163 on Herodotus' argument by εἰκός in treating Helen's case.

Dares) share another similarity with Defoe's novel (a fact that should steer us in the right direction in reassessing these texts as legitimate narrative fiction, without trying to relegate them in this or that special sub-category): they deploy a self-validating frame, in the form of a paratext which explains how the texts themselves were published.<sup>38</sup> Thirdly, the choice of persona is perfectly reflected in the choice of voice that had the unpredictable advantage of adapting itself to the Latin translation and to the ensuing impoverishment of style. Being simple soldiers, it is only to be expected that Dictys and Dares would speak from a lowly perspective. Equally appropriate is that they record the feats of the war, great and small, in an unadorned, matter of fact style. When the texts were turned into Latin, the translators (especially Dares') were quick to claim their inadequacies of style as being faithful to the originals:

I...made an exact translation into Latin, neither adding nor omitting anything, nor giving any personal touch. Following the straightforward and simple style of the Greek original, I translated word for word.<sup>39</sup>

It is highly significant that at the end of the 16th century, the "simplicity and bareness" of Dares' style are cited as proof of his superior detachment and impartiality by Dictys and Dares' main Renaissance editor, Tommaso Porcacchi:

The style in which Dares wrote [the account of the War], is pure, and it demonstrates less involvement than the one written by Dictys of Crete, who added many things to it... Dares narrates the bare facts: whereas Dictys extolls the Greeks' deeds and plays down or blames the Trojans'. Indeed, one never reads in Dictys of a noble or glorious feat by a Trojan.<sup>40</sup>

What is more, Dictys and Dares' Homer-related irony emerges only in the contents and not in the form of their narrative. Unlike what happened, for instance,

<sup>38</sup> We can ascertain the presence of the paratext in the Greek originals for Dictys only, but its importance was immediately clear both to Dictys' and to Dares' translators, who added their own paratexts to the Latin versions. Cf. Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, edited after the original editions by J. W. Clark, London, Macmillan and co. 1866, *Preface to Part I* and *Preface to Part II*, ix–xii.

<sup>39</sup> Dares, *Prefatory Letter* "Cornelius Nepos Sallustio suo salutem" (trans. Frazer 1966, 133).

<sup>40</sup> "Lo stile, in che Darete la scrisse, è puro, e si comprende in essa minor passione, che è in quella di Ditte Candiotto, il quale v'ha inserto molte cose... Darete narra con semplicità e nudezza il successo delle cose: ma Ditte esalta di soverchio l'impresa de' Greci e deprime, o accusa quelle de' Troiani: anzi non si legge in Ditte, che mai i Troiani commettessero atto nobile, o glorioso." Porcacchi 1565, l. V, 308.

in Lucian, the pair manage to maintain the impression of respectable historiographers; thus forcing their ambiguously historical subject—the Trojan War—to be completely consistent with the explanatory requirement. There is no room left for the supernatural or the divine in general.

Both Dictys and Dares build their whole narrative as an interplay with Homer's *Iliad*.<sup>41</sup> The overall effect they try to convey, however, is not one of blatant parody or reversal or critique of the Homeric poem. Their approach is in fact subtler and aims at a sort of deadpan humor that requires the active involvement of the reader to be acknowledged. But, for later readers, who had lost all familiarity with Homer and who distrusted poetry as a means of transmitting historical data, all such humor was lost, and Dictys and Dares just came across as trustworthy and accurate.

Within this picture, all it took for the texts' original intention and Homeric discourse to be lost was for the ancient world to lose its familiarity with Homer. This is apparent in the case of Dictys' Latin translator and the first key victim, Lucius Septimius. For Septimius, the chronological distance from the Greek text of Dictys has already turned itself into a *cultural* distance. Even though he writes in good, Sallustian Latin, it is clear that Septimius did not recognize the Homeric subtext of his Dictys, nor the ironic, metanarrative character of it, and is therefore ready to swear by the documentary value of the *Ephemeris*.

Now, although we can dismiss the elusive Septimius as "exceptionally silly,"<sup>42</sup> his interventions in Dictys' Greek text immediately resonated with Dares' Latin translator. The latter, presumably conscious of the text's fictional character, hid behind the authoritative name of Cornelius Nepos, and the paratext he made up was in the form of a letter from the famous Latin historian to the equally famous Sallust: the best certification of the *De excidio*'s historical character and one destined to immense success from the Church Fathers onwards.<sup>43</sup>

From Isidorus' first assessment of Dares as *primus historicus*, the pair never abandoned their historical status: their whole *Nachleben* is in fact witness to this: from the medieval circulation,<sup>44</sup> to the *editio princeps*, to the first critical

<sup>41</sup> Timpanaro 1987; Venini 1981.

<sup>42</sup> Champlin (1981) proposes to identify Lucius Septimius with the historical character Serenus Sammonicus, from the entourage of Septimius Severus, preceptor to Geta and Caracalla, of notice for being "exceptionally silly" and "sadly credulous" in his pedantry (194, 207). Gainsford (2012) agrees to consider Septimius as "more likely to be a dupe than a stooge" (63).

<sup>43</sup> Nepos' spurious letter even had a textual reception of its own, as it was listed among the surviving works of Nepos by scores of reputed humanists (Petrarca, Sicco Polenton, Pier Candido Decembrio among others: see Prosperi 2013, 27, 78, 90).

<sup>44</sup> Punzi 1991; Clark 2010.

edition, to subsequent editorial fortunes, Dictys and Dares were seen as historians.<sup>45</sup> However, the validating device of the paratexts alone would not fully explain Dictys and Dares' unrelenting success as documentary sources. If we look for instance at another Second Sophistic Homer-centered text such as Philostratus' *Heroicus*, we can see how a validating frame (a mimetic dialogue) is also put on display, but then clashes with a narrative where the supernatural element (the ghost of Protesilaus) consciously dismantles any pretense to truthfulness. In other words, the paratexts, albeit crucial, combined in Dictys and Dares with narrative strategies perfectly compliant with the principle named by Bernard Williams "explanatory requirement," thus erasing from the Trojan story any element of myth and thus reassessing it fully as history. All the elements that contributed to their historical reception are in fact a consequence of their narrative choices, starting with the first and basic one.

### *Narrative Strategies*

I contend that it is precisely the compliance of Dictys and Dares with the explanatory requirement that has decreed their success in all subsequent centuries, even more than the purported autopsy of their narrative, which has always been stressed as key to their extraordinary reception. One key element in attaining a no-nonsense, historical appearance for their narratives, was to consistently and completely remove the gods. The gods' absence was immediately picked up by readers—starting from the very first ones—as a strong point that Dictys and Dares had over Homer:

Thus my readers can know exactly what happened according to this account and judge for themselves whether Dares the Phrygian or Homer wrote the more truthfully—Dares, who lived and fought at the time the Greeks stormed Troy, or Homer, who was born long after the War was over. When the Athenians judged this matter, they found Homer insane for describing gods battling with mortals.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>45</sup> On Dares: Clark 2011; on Dictys and Dares Prosperi 2013, 28–38.

<sup>46</sup> Dares, *Prefatory Letter* "Cornelius Nepos Sallustio suo salutem" (trans. Frazer 1966, 133). It is worth noting that Petrarca retained the information of Homer's folly from the spurious Nepos' letter, as he annotated in his copy of the Servian commentary to the *Aeneid*: Petrarca 2006, ii, 916–917.

Neither text calls into question Venus or divine intervention as motives for Helen's abduction. Whereas in Dictys there is simply no mention of the goddess as the inspirer of the rape, in Dares the judgement of Paris is transposed from actual reality to dream:

Alexander...while hunting in the woods on Mount Ida...had fallen asleep and dreamt as follows:

Mercury brought Juno, Venus, and Minerva to him to judge of their beauty. Then Venus promised, if he judged her most beautiful, to give him in marriage whoever was deemed the loveliest woman in Greece. Thus, finally, on hearing Venus' promise, he judged her the most beautiful.<sup>47</sup>

Similarly, any supernatural event is rationalized away, as in the death of Castor and Pollux:

Castor and Pollux, immediately upon learning of their sister Helen's abduction, had set sail in pursuit. When, however, they landed on the island of Lesbos, a great storm arose and, lo and behold, they were nowhere in sight. That was the story. Later, people thought that they had been made immortal. The Lesbians, taking to the sea and searching even to Troy, had returned to report that they had found no trace of Castor and Pollux.<sup>48</sup>

But it is in the analysis of the inexplicable obstinacy shown by the Trojans in keeping Helen that the two texts best reveal their narrative attitude and the reason for their success. As we have seen, Priam's refusal to give Helen back was felt as a major non sequitur by readers such as Herodotus who were striving to assess the historicity of the War. Dictys and Dares deal with the irrationality of the Trojans' behavior by offering alternative explanations, much as Herodotus did, albeit tacitly.

In Dictys, as I mentioned, divine intervention plays no part in summoning Paris to abduct Helen: his crime is a consequence of his recklessness and infatuation for the Queen of Sparta. As for the puzzling obstinacy demonstrated by the Trojans in not returning Helen to Menelaus, this is deftly explained away as the outcome of several combined factors: the greed of Priam, who is loath to release the booty Paris looted from Sparta; his sons' lust after the Spartan women Paris had taken with Helen; and Hecuba's ill-advised manipulation of her husband and children (I.10). And as for Helen's wish to stay in Troy, Dictys offers,

<sup>47</sup> Dares VII, trans. Frazer 1966, 138–139.

<sup>48</sup> Dares XI, trans. Frazer 1966, 142.

in characteristic fashion, two alternative explanations (I.9), one more benevolent, the other less: her true love for Paris or her fear of Menelaus' reaction should she go back to Sparta.<sup>49</sup>

In Dares, who takes a more pro-Trojan stance, Paris' behavior is simply an act of retribution for the Greeks' abduction of Priam's sister, Hesione, and their refusal to give her back.

Priam...called the people to assembly...he told how the Greeks had wronged the Trojans. He had sent Antenor as an envoy to Greece to regain his sister Hesione and obtain reparation for the Trojans, but the Greeks had treated Antenor scornfully and sent him home empty-handed. For this reason he had decided to send Alexander with a fleet against Greece. Thus Alexander would avenge the death of his grand-father and the other wrongs that the Trojans had suffered.<sup>50</sup>

As for Priam's refusal to return Helen to the Greeks, Dares justifies it as a legitimate retaliation for the Greeks' detention of Hesione. Incidentally, this explanation that shifted responsibility for the war from the Trojans to the Greeks met with immense success in Medieval and Early Modern times, when dynasts from all over Europe were striving to promote themselves as heirs to Troy.<sup>51</sup>

How does a myth come into being? How does it spread? How does it conquer universal imagination and how does it prevail at times over competing myths? Plato was the first to wonder about the question and come up with an answer. He moved from the conviction that the ideal city could only be persuaded and guided by control over *φημή*. It is from this conviction that he devised the *mitologema* of the three classes of citizens in the *Republic*. However, Plato's myth was an artificial construction: and it didn't escape him that such a myth was by its own nature doomed. No newly minted myth, no matter how sophisticated, could replace *for present times* the thousands of already existing *mitologemata*. What was the legislator to do, then? Plato offers an answer: the only chance to affirm a real control over the *φημή* is confined in the future. (*Resp.* 415 c1–416 d2)

As Marcel Detienne has claimed, "the time of persuasion is the future." So, all that's left to the Republic's legislator is a wish: "Let our *μῦθος* go its own

<sup>49</sup> "It was by no means clear why she preferred to look after her interests in this way. Was it because of her immodest love for Alexander, or because of her fear of the punishment her husband would exact for desertion?" (Dictys I.9; trans. Frazer 1966, 28).

<sup>50</sup> Dares 8 (trans. Frazer 1966, 139).

<sup>51</sup> Prosperi 2013; Clark 2010; Görich 2006; Jung 1996; Jung 1997.

way, as the φημή will decide" (415 d 6–7).<sup>52</sup> What Plato could not foresee is that this scenario would come into actual being within a few centuries for one of the most relevant myths in Western culture: the Trojan War. In the narrow passage leading from classical antiquity to the Common Era, the whole bulk of literary and mythographic Greek tradition on the Trojan myth simply disappeared. The only surviving versions were late antique and in Latin. What is more important, these versions were completely *artificial*; more than that: they were (unwitting) *forgeries*. As it happened, though, the West received these versions as the *only authoritative ones* and embraced them enthusiastically. As a result, literary forgeries were received and treated as historical documents on all respects. The consequences on the Trojan War reception in Western tradition are hard to overestimate.

### References

- Allan, W. (2008) (ed.), Introduction to Euripides, *Helen*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1–85.
- Austin, N. (1994), *Helen of Troy and her Shameless Phantom*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Asheri, D. (1988), "General Introduction," *Herodotus, Le storie, Libro I – La Lidia e la Persia*. Milano: Mondadori.
- Beschorner, A. (1992), *Untersuchungen zu Dares Phrygius*. Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag.
- Boedeker, D. (2000), "Herodotus's Genre(s)." *Matrices of Genre. Authors, Canons, and Society*. Eds. M. Depew, D. Obbink. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 97–114.
- Bornmann, F. (1987), "Note su Darete Frigio." *Filologia e forme letterarie. Studi offerti a Francesco della Corte*, vol. I. Urbino: Università degli Studi di Urbino, 391–395.
- Canfora, L. (1999), *La storiografia greca*. Milano: Bruno Mondadori.
- Champlin, E. (1981), "Serenus Sammonicus," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 85: 189–212.
- Clark, F. (2010), "Reading the 'First Pagan Historiographer': Dares Phrygius and Medieval Genealogy," *Viator: Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 41.2: 203–226.
- (2011), "Authenticity, Antiquity, and Authority: Dares Phrygius in Early Modern Europe," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 72.2: 183–207.
- Clark, J. W. (1866) (ed.), *Daniel Defoe, Robinson Crusoe*. London: Macmillan and Co.
- Corcella, A. (1984), *Erodoto e l'analogia*. Palermo: Sellerio.
- Detienne, Marcel. (1981), *L'invention de la mythologie*. Paris.
- Du , Casey and Gregory Nagy. (2003), "Preliminaries." J. K. Berenson Maclean and E. Bradshaw Aitken eds. *Flavius Philostratus, On Heroes*. Leiden: Brill.
- Eisenhut, W. (1958) (ed.), *Dictys Cretensis*. Leipzig: Teubner.
- Erskine, A. (2001), *Troy between Greece and Rome. Local Tradition and Imperial Power*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>52</sup> Detienne 1981. 122.



- Faivre d'Arcier, L. (2006), *Histoire et géographie d'un mythe. La circulation des manuscrits du De Excidio Troiae de Darès le Phrygien (viiiie–xve siècles)*. Paris: École des chartes.
- Faraoane, Francesco. (1498) (ed.), *Dictys Cretensis Historia Troiana. Dares Phrygius de excidio Troiae historia*. Messina: Guilelmus Schonberger.
- Frazer, R. M. (1966), *The Trojan War. The Chronicles of Dictys of Crete and Dares the Phrygian*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Fusillo, M. (1988), "Le miroir de la Lune–L'Histoire vraie de Lucien de la satire à l'utopie," *Poétique* 73: 109–135.
- (1989), *Il romanzo greco: polifonia ed eros*. Venezia: Marsilio.
- Gabba, E. (1981), "True History and False History in Classical Antiquity," *Journal of Roman Studies* 71: 50–62.
- Gainsford, P. (2012), "Diktys of Crete," *The Cambridge Classical Journal* 58: 58–87.
- Garbugino, G. (2011) (ed.), *Darete Frigio, La storia della distruzione di Troia*. Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso.
- Georgiadou A. and D. H. J. Larmour. (1998) (eds.), *Lucian's Science Fiction Novel True Histories*. Leiden: Brill.
- Görich, K. (2006), "Troia im Mittelalter. der Mythos als politische Legitimation." *Der Traum von Troia*. Ed. M. Zimmermann, Munich: C. H. Beck, 120–134.
- Hansen, William. (2003), "Strategies of Authentication in Ancient Popular Literature." *The Ancient Novel and Beyond*, Eds. S. Panayotakis, M. Zimmermann, and W. Keulen, Leiden: Brill, 301–314.
- Hatzilambrou, R. and D. Obbink. (eds) "4944. Dictys Cretensis, *Bellum Troianum* V 15–17," *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri* 73: 88–103.
- Holzberg, Niklas. (1996), "The Genre: Novels Proper and the Fringe." *The Novel in the Ancient World*. Ed. G. Schmeling. Leiden: Brill, 11–28.
- Jung, M.-R. (1996), *La légende de Troie en France au moyen âge: analyse des versions françaises et bibliographie raisonnée des manuscrits*. Bâle: Francke.
- (1997), "L'histoire grecque: Darès et les suites." *Entre fiction et histoire: Troie et Rome au Moyen Age*. Eds. E. Baumgartner, L. Harf-Lancner. Paris: Presses de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 185–206.
- Kim, L. (2010), *Homer between History and Fiction in Imperial Greek Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ligota, C. (1982), "'This Story is Not True'. Fact and Fiction in Antiquity," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute* 45: 1–13.
- (2007), "Lucian on the Writing of History - Obsolescence Survived." *Lucian of Samosata Vivus et Redivivus*. Eds. C. Ligota, and L. Panizza. London: Nino Aragno Editore, 45–71.
- Lloyd, A. B. (1975a), *Herodotus Book II—Introduction*. Leiden: Brill.
- (1975b), *Herodotus Book II—Commentary 1–98*. Leiden: Brill.
- (1988), *Herodotus Book II—Commentary 99–182*. Leiden: Brill.
- Maffei, R. (1530), *Commentariorum Urbanorum octo et triginta libri*. Basileae: Froben.
- Marincola, J. (2006), "Herodotus and the Poetry of the Past." *The Cambridge Companion to Herodotus*. Eds. C. Dewald and J. Marincola. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 13–28.
- McNeill, W. H. (1986), "Mythistory, or Truth, Myth, History, and Historians," *American Historical Review* 91.1: 1–10.
- Merkle, S. (1996), "The Truth and Nothing but the Truth: Dictys and Dares." *The Novel in the Ancient World*. Ed. G. Schmeling. Leiden: Brill, 563–580.

- Momigliano, A. (1960), "Erodoto e la storiografia moderna. Alcuni problemi presentati ad un convegno di umanisti." *Secondo contributo alla storia degli studi classici*. Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 45–56.
- (1984a), "Storia antica e antiquaria." *Sui fondamenti della storia antica*. Torino: Einaudi, 3–45.
- (1984b), "La retorica della storia e la storia della retorica. Sui tropi di Hayden White." *Sui fondamenti della storia antica*. Torino: Einaudi, 465–476.
- (1984c), "Le regole del gioco nello studio della storia antica." *Sui fondamenti della storia antica*. Torino: Einaudi, 477–486.
- Nenci, G. (1955), "Il motivo dell'autopsia nella storiografia greca," *Studi classici e orientali* 3: 14–46.
- Ni Mheallaigh, K. (2008), "Pseudo-Documentarism and the Limits of Ancient Fiction," *American Journal of Philology* 129.3: 403–431.
- Perry, E. (1967), *The Ancient Romances*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Petrarca, F. (2006), *Le postille del Virgilio Ambrosiano*. M. Baglio, A. Nebuloni Testa e M. Petoletti eds. Padova: Antenore.
- Porcacchi, Tomaso. (1565), *Il primo volume delle cagioni delle guerre antiche tratte da gl'historici antichi greci a beneficio di chi vol'adornarsi l'animo delle Gioie dell'Historie*. Venezia: Gabriel Giolito de Ferrari.
- Prosperi, Valentina. (2013), *Omero sconfitto - Ricerche sul mito di Troia dall'antichità al Rinascimento*. Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura.
- Punzi, A. (1991), "La circolazione della materia troiana nell'Europa del '200: da Darete Frigio al Roman de Troie en prose," *Messana* VI: 69–108.
- Schmeling, G. (1996) (ed.), *The Novel in the Ancient World*. Leiden: Brill.
- Schwartz, E. (1896), *Fünf Vorträge über den Griechischen Roman*. Berlin: Druck und Verlag von Georg Reimer.
- Solomon, J. (2007), "The Vacillations of the Trojan Myth: Popularization & Classicization, Variation & Codification," *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 14.3/4: 482–534.
- Stenger, J. (2005), "Dares Phrygius und kein griechisches Original," *Grazer Beiträge* 24: 175–190.
- Strasburger, H. (1979), "La storia secondo i greci: due modelli storiografici." *La storiografia greca. Guida storica e critica*. Ed. D. Musti. Roma: Laterza, 1–32.
- Tarcagnola, G. (1585), *Delle Istorie del mondo di M. Giovanni Tarcagnola: Lequali contengono quanto al principio del Mondo è successo, fino all'anno 1513, cavate da piu degni et piu gravi autori, et che abbino nella lingua Greca, o nella Latina scritto*. Venezia, Giunti.
- Tatum, J., (1994) (ed.), *The Search for the Ancient Novel*. London: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Timpanaro, S. (1987), "Sulla composizione e la tecnica narrativa dell'*Ephemeris* di Ditti-Settimio." *Filologia e forme letterarie, studi offerti a Francesco della Corte*. Vol. IV. Urbino, 169–215.
- Venini, P. (1981), "Ditti Cretese e Omer." *Memorie dell'Istituto Lombardo-Accademia di Scienze e Lettere—Classe di Lettere—Scienze Morali e Storiche*. 37.2: 161–198.
- West, M. L. (2011a), "Immortal Helen." *Hellenica - Selected Papers on Greek Literature and Thought, Volume I: Epic*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 80–96.

- West, Martin L. (2011b), "History and Prehistory: the Troy Saga." *Hellenica - Selected Papers on Greek Literature and Thought, Volume I: Epic*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 97–112.
- Whitmarsh, T. (2011), *Narrative and Identity in the Ancient Greek Novel - Returning Romance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Williams, Bernard. (2002), *Truth and Truthfulness, an Essay in Genealogy*. Princeton and Oxford.
- Wright, M. (2005), *Euripides' Escape-Tragedies: A Study of Helen, Andromeda and Iphigenia Among the Taurians*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (repr. 2009).



# *Protagoras's Myth:* Between Pastiche and Falsification

EMILIA RUIZ YAMUZA  
University of Seville

A thin but shadowy line demarcates the borders between pastiche, copy (or plagiarism), and forgery. It can be said that a pastiche is a form of imitation, using either a specific work or merely an author's stylistic and thematic characteristics, in order to produce a new work by a different author with the intention, primary or secondary, of exhibiting mastery and achieving surprising effects through decontextualization and, on occasion, the addition of new elements.<sup>1</sup> The overriding purpose, above all other considerations, in the case of a forgery is to deceive the audience of the forged work. Pastiche and forgery are each successful when the author masters perfectly the technique of the original author: the difference resides in how the audience reacts. In pastiche, one finds a game of imitation and influence; in forgery, one receives a standalone product that should be understood in and of itself. It is useful to consider these concepts by applying them to some works by Plato, particularly those passages where a literary product is presented as the work of a real author: for example, the speech attributed to Lysias in the *Phaedrus*, the speeches in the *Symposium*, particularly those of Aristophanes or Agathon, or the myth in the *Protagoras*. Consequently, it should be possible to ascertain whether the aforementioned passages exhibit the characteristics of pastiches or forgery. However, it would

---

<sup>1</sup> About the concept of pastiche and its vitality see Dyer (2007, 131) who believes that the concept would be applicable to any period in history. The idea that the pastiche, a sub-type of metaliterature, implies a consciousness of the literary genres and a reflection on their features applies here. Some of the historical characteristics that allow for pastiche—societies with a high level of cultural self-awareness in crucial moments in their history and with a wide concept of originality—seem to be present here (Dyer 2007, 131–133). Features from the three main groups—nearness to the model, deformation (through selection, accentuation, exaggeration and concentration of the features) and discrepancy (inadequacy, anachronism, self-reference and stylistic inconsistency)—are present in the myth as well.

also be necessary to take into consideration the reception of these works by different readers in order to determine if they are more like pastiches or forgeries.

My focus is on the myth in the *Protagoras* (320c-323a), which is especially challenging because of an additional characteristic: the myth is narrated by a historical author with a strong ideological position. Three conclusions are possible: Plato reproduces, i.e. copies, almost identically a Protagorean myth; Plato produces a Protagorean myth and attributes it to Protagoras; or Plato produces a Protagorean myth in a Platonic style. In the second case, the myth is more like a forgery, intended to be perceived as the authentic work of Protagoras; in the third, the myth is more like a pastiche. While it is not my intention to review in full the scholarly commentary on the myth offered in the *Protagoras*—such a task would require a full monograph—it is worth drawing attention to the overall lack of unanimity in the scholarly literature on the topic. A constant difference in opinions that has prevented a resolution of the author's identity. One school of thought, shared by Friedländer (1969 [1958], 175–177), Maguire (1977, 119–121) and, lately, Gerd Van Riel,<sup>2</sup> holds that the myth is authored by Plato. The other camp, Untersteiner (1967 [1949], I.96. n. 1), Heinimann (1945, 115), Lana (1950: *passim*), Guthrie (1969, III 63–64), Brisson or lately Manuwald,<sup>3</sup> holds that the myth is the work of Protagoras, faithfully reproduced by Plato—although the question of which work by Protagoras would have contained the myth remains unresolved.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> He compares the content of the myth with the version offered in *Politicus* and some passages from *Laws*; e.g., III 712b–714b following Friedländer (1969 [1958], I 204–205). Cf. Friedländer (1969 [1958], I 175–177) about authorship. The myth, *pace* van Riel (2012, 151) is not “a story of bitter misery.”

<sup>3</sup> Manuwald (1996, 1999 and 2003). In 2013, 176 he states that “the most plausible reading (is) that the myth in its core originates from the historical Protagoras rather than from Plato himself.”

<sup>4</sup> Manuwald (1999, 175): “Während also einige Wahrscheinlichkeit besteht, dass jedenfalls der Mythos formal und inhaltlich relativ eng an den historischen Protagoras angelehnt ist, lässt sich über die Schrift des Protagoras, in dem er vorgekommen sein könnte, wenig ausmachen. Die vielfach als Quelle angenommene Schrift, *Über den Urzustand* (Περὶ τῆς ἐν ἀρχῇ καταστάσεως = Diog. Laert. 9.55 = VS 80B8b) ist schlecht bezeugt. Der Titel ist vielleicht nur ein Reflex des Textes im *Protagoras* (vgl. Diels VS Bd. II, S. 267 Anm. zu Z.9), und vor allem: der Mythos im *Protagoras* lässt sich, wie sich zeigen wird, nicht als genuine Kulturentstehungslehre verstehen. Eher käme die allerdings ebenfalls schwach bezeugte Schrift *Über die Staatsverfassung* (Περὶ πολιτείας, vgl. Diog. Laert. 9.55 = VS 80B8a) in Betracht (vgl. Zeller I 2, 1386 Anm.4) worin der Mythos als Begründung von bestimmten, für jedes Gemeinwesen notwendigen Fähigkeiten seinen Platz gehabt haben könnte. Doch sind auch andere Möglichkeiten denkbar, z.B. dass die Gedanken aus einem im einzelnen nicht mehr feststellbaren Zusammenhang stammen, in

The myth in the *Protagoras* has a diptych structure that recounts the progress of the human being through a series of steps that are not always well ordered. Human evolution has been imagined either in terms of degeneration or in terms of progress based on the point of view taken by the author: generally pessimistic and mythic in the first case, and optimistic and rationalist in the second. The pessimistic myths offered by Hesiod are challenged by the Sophistic myths that, somewhat paradoxically, are obviously fictive yet clearly rationalist in character. The myth in Plato's dialogue is an optimistic one that presents the progress of humanity in two phases. In the first phase, before the creation process that resulted in living beings, Epimetheus asks permission of Prometheus to distribute gifts to animals and men. This distribution leaves human beings deprived of a natural defense. Prometheus, in order to protect the human beings, steals technical skills along with fire from the workplaces of Hephaistus and Athena. The gift provides man with the knowledge that makes survival possible, and because of this man "gets a share of the god part" (ὁ ἄνθρωπος θείας μετέσχε μοίρας). A different evolutionary period begins at that moment: human beings are able to trust in gods,<sup>5</sup> build temples and altars, communicate through language, and secure for themselves dwellings and shelters.

Although they are able to procure sustenance, in the struggle with animals humans cannot actually prevail. The intervention of Hermes, sent by Zeus, then remedies this human need with an additional gift. Hermes is sent by Zeus to bring humans the idea of justice (δίκη) and respectful fear (αἰδώς), which are necessary for communal living: these gifts represent the essential materials of political virtue. Zeus sends these gifts with a condition: all humans have to have a share of them, and they will not be like special skills or abilities that some people possess and others do not. For example, it is sufficient for a community if only one individual has the ability to practice healing, play music, or build houses. A law by Zeus that sentences to death those who do not have their share of both concludes the myth. The speech is followed by a very long epimythion in which the sophist develops the elements of the myth and insists on the universality of the gift, positing this universality as the foundation of the democratic system.

The structure of the myth is divided into these two sections, so it can be suggested that there is a blending of two myths that are parallel in their struc-

---

dem der Sophist als Lehrer des Gut-Seins (349a3) sein Gebiet über sonstige Disziplinen erhob." Untersteiner (1961, 96 n.1), on the other hand, held that the protagorean work was *The Truth*.

<sup>5</sup> Pl. *Prt.* 321e–322a πρῶτον μὲν διὰ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ συγγένειαν ζῶων μόνον θεοὺς ἐνόμισεν, καὶ ἐπεχείρει βομούς τε ἰδρύεσθαι καὶ ἀγάλματα θεῶν. The surprising element in the text is not the importance of religious feeling in the individual and society but its justification.

tures. In both, there is a condition of human defenselessness that a god tries to solve by means of a donation. There is a progression in the two parts from a material and technical gift to a moral and ethical gift, from the gift of fire to the gift of justice. The myth has many sources. The donation of fire appears in Hesiod's *Theogony* 565–570 and *Erga* 47–53. The idea that justice comes from Zeus appears in Hesiod, too, but it is located in the myth of the races (*Erga* 275–280). It is clear that the influence of philosophical thought is greater than the influence of the religious or mythical thinking here: the authority of philosophers, such as Democritus,<sup>6</sup> who viewed human progress as moving from defenselessness to mastery of those skills that enable a communal life, is more prominent than the influence of myth as religious belief. Indeed, it should be mentioned that not only in these philosophical cosmogonies or anthropogonies, but also in later literary accounts,<sup>7</sup> like those of Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Isocrates and Moschion,<sup>8</sup> it is emphasized that the human being, on account of his intelligence, “teaches himself” and learns to live in society using skills that will enable his survival. This process occurs “through time,” as a gradual development.<sup>9</sup> In the myth, the evolutionary structure presents an advancement from the birth of religious feelings (πρῶτον μὲν διὰ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ συγγένειαν ζῶων μόνον θεοῦς ἐνόμισεν) to the capability of communicating through language as a technical product, which is quickly acquired, to the eventual discovery of dwellings,

<sup>6</sup> Philostratus, SV 1.10, emphasizes that Democritus was Protagoras' teacher, although *stricto sensu* it is impossible. This could be understood as a way of expressing the influence exerted on him by Democritus. From Diels onward, Democritus is considered the source of the cosmogony and anthropogony transmitted by Diodorus Siculus in I 7–8 and related to this myth. Cf. Lana, Nestle *et al.* (1978, 24).

<sup>7</sup> Aeschylus, *Prometheus* 447–506, lists the major achievements of human beings under a mythical cover. Sophocles, *Antigone* 332–337, clearly express that human progress is a human achievement. Euripides, *Supplices* 201–213, offers an optimistic vision of progress. The *Sisiphus* fragment attributed to Critias (43F 19 Snell) insists on the gradual development of human beings and introduces the idea that the gods are a human invention. Ps. Hippocrates *De prisca medicina* 3 explains the discovery of food, and there is a mythical version of the same theme provided by *Panegyricus* 28–29. All of them prove the interest of the issue. Nestle *et al.* (1978: 24–25) add Herodotus 3.108 to the sources: “Die Schrift des Protagoras hat tiefe und zahlreiche Spuren hinterlassen. Die älteste findet sich bei Herodot.”

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Nestle's *et al.* (1978: 24–25) and Vinagre's (2003, 127–142) comparisons of the aspects considered by the different authors.

<sup>9</sup> Heinemann (2003, 85) considers it an innovation that the process was produced “once” in comparison with the permanent order of the world in the Presocratics. He (86–93) considers that there are seven different groups of principles that organize and guarantee order in the world. The treatment of gods in this myth coincides with Heraclitus' use of the Erinyes.



clothes, shoes, shelter, and food from the earth (ἔπειτα φωνὴν καὶ ὀνόματα ταχὺ διηρθρώσατο τῇ τέχνῃ, καὶ οἰκήσεις καὶ ἐσθῆτας καὶ ὑποδέσεις καὶ στρωμνὰς καὶ τὰς ἐκ γῆς τροφὰς ἤϋρετο). It appears that the advancement is not starkly divided into times before and after, but rather emerges according to importance or interest for the plot (Taylor *ad loc.*). I am not convinced that Taylor's explanation would render a less disconcerting reading of the evolutionary sequence of the human being in the myth. In this confused and confusing presentation of evolution, some Platonic mediation might be discerned.

The greatest difficulty with defending the idea of the myth's Protagorean authorship is the mention of natural kinship between men and gods, τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ συγγένειαν, since this clashes with Protagoras' well-known agnosticism ([Fr.4]: “περὶ μὲν θεῶν οὐκ ἔχω εἰδέναι, οὐθ' ὥς εἰσὶν οὐθ' ὥς οὐκ εἰσὶν οὐθ' ὅποιοί τινες ἰδέαν· πολλὰ γάρ τὰ κωλύοντα εἰδέναι ἢ τ' ἀδηλότης καὶ βραχὺς ὢν ὁ βίος τοῦ ἀνθρώπου”) and with the famous *Homo Mensura Satz*, “πάντων χρημάτων μέτρον ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος” (Fr. 1). The kinship between men and gods can be understood in a literal way,<sup>10</sup> as the Neoplatonists did when they strikingly developed the notion into an argument for the immortality of the soul. But it could also be understood from a Protagorean point of view: men and gods are not dramatically different, because the gods themselves are a product or creation of human intelligence. Gods are in the same class as humans, then, because both belong to the realm of human behavior and activity: humans are as connected to gods as an author is to his or her work!<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, the context does not bolster this interpretation. The sentence itself remains an addition by Plato.

A second item that calls attention is the presence of αἰδώς and δίκη, as the gift of political virtues, in the second part of the myth. I do not agree with the idea that the use of these words instead of σωφροσύνη καὶ δικαιοσύνη can be explained because the poetic style of the myth automatically necessitates a more poetic vocabulary: on the contrary, the use of poetic vocabulary is not a compulsory feature of mythic style (cf. Thesleff 1967, 74ss)<sup>12</sup> Contrariwise, there is a wider tradition that links the ideas of respect and shame with the attitudes of the *homo politicus* toward the laws, especially unwritten laws understood to provide the foundations of society: this can be seen, for example, in the *oratio funebris* by Pericles:

<sup>10</sup> Thein (2003, 65) offers a highly imaginative explanation. He thinks that kinship comes from the form of the body attributed before the intervention of Epimetheus: “men are originally theomorphic.”

<sup>11</sup> Müller (1965, 143): “Der Mensch wird nun zum ‘Mass,’ an dem die Götter gemessen werden.”

<sup>12</sup> Manuwald (1999, 196); Taylor *ad* 322c.

Thuc. II. 38.1

ἀνεπαχθῶς δὲ τὰ ἴδια προσομιλοῦντες τὰ δημόσια διὰ δέος μάλιστα οὐ παρανομοῦμεν, τῶν τε αἰεὶ ἐν ἀρχῇ ὄντων ἀκροάσει καὶ τῶν νόμων, καὶ μάλιστα αὐτῶν ὅσοι τε ἐπ' ὠφελία τῶν ἀδικουμένων κεῖνται καὶ ὅσοι ἄγραφοι ὄντες αἰσχύνῃ ὁμολογουμένην φέρουσιν.

But all this ease in our private relations does not make us lawless as citizens. Against this fear is our chief safeguard, teaching us to obey the magistrates and the laws, particularly such as regard the protection of the injured, whether they are actually on the statute book, or belong to that code which, although unwritten, yet cannot be broken without acknowledged disgrace. (trans. Crawley)

The idea of justice does not appear in the text here, but a related idea of protecting the injured is clearly expressed. Hence three terms (δέος, αἰσχύνῃ, ἀδικουμένων) can be discerned which offer a similar conceptual structure to that offered by δίκη and αἰδώς: indeed, the term αἰδώς incorporates both fear and shame as features. The presence alone of these terms is a sign of the cultural and philosophical environment from which this myth must have emerged: that of the Athenian Enlightenment, which was nearer in time to Protagoras than to Plato. The presence of δίκη and αἰδώς in the text, consequently, is, *pace* Maguire,<sup>13</sup> not a foreign moralistic inserted by Plato into the amorism of Protagoras, but instead represents a constant in the understanding developed during the Athenian Enlightenment of the relationship of citizens to the written and unwritten laws. The presence of αἰδώς instead of αἰσχύνῃ therefore does not help much in identifying the author.<sup>14</sup>

It should come as no surprise that the language of this myth bears several distinct similarities to other Platonic myths:<sup>15</sup> archaic style, repetition of the main idea expressed by a verb by means of a participle of the same verb, the use

<sup>13</sup> Maguire (1977, 110–111) holds that there is a shift from an amoral conception of areté to a moral understanding. In other dialogues, the shift is provoked by Socrates, but in the *Protagoras* it is Protagoras who introduces it using the terms αἰδώς τε καὶ δίκη and assumes these to be the natural bases of δικαιοσύνη and σωφροσύνη.

<sup>14</sup> Sometimes the terms αἰσχύνῃ and αἰδώς are synonymous. Cf. Liddell-Scott-Jones, s.v. αἰσχύνῃ: “like αἰδώς, sense of shame, honour.” Aristotle’s definition of αἰδώς in *Nicomachean Ethics* 1128b supplies the common use of the word and shows the synonymy between αἰσχύνῃ and αἰδώς. He views it as a feeling, πάθος, and not a virtue, produced by “a kind of fear of disrepute.”

<sup>15</sup> The features of the mythical style had been perfectly defined by Thesleff, (1962, 64–65). Cf. Ruiz Yamuza (1986, 23–28).

of straightforward connectors (or the absence of a variety of connecting devices in favor of the use of the same conjunctions, conjunctive adverbs or particles). But these features are not exclusive to Platonic myths since in all likelihood they are also present in the Sophistic and Socratic myths from which the Platonic ones might conceivably derive.<sup>16</sup> However, from a structural point of view, both the dramatic intensity of its insertion in the dialogue, beginning with discussion of the form in which Protagoras should express his theory, and its overall placement in the text make this myth seem quite different from the standard Platonic myth, which ordinarily has a less dramatic placement. The myth, continued and developed in the dialogue's sizeable epimythion, effectively makes its presence known throughout the entire dialogue.<sup>17</sup> The characters in this myth come from the common mythico-religious repository as in other Platonic myths, but here the characters seem to have been developed, permitting them to show progress, separate from the common repository, and become abstract figures with little or no effective participation in the narrated action. Additionally, the tendency to expand upon existing myths with material from different sources—derived from the realm of physical science, for example, or from philosophical speculations by the author or by others—is noticeable in this Protagorean myth but develops further<sup>18</sup> in the later “mature” Platonic myths. Some elements here that could be seen as typical of Sophistic myth—like the personification of abstract entities or the tendency toward allegory—are additionally visible.<sup>19</sup> The presence of Epimetheus alongside his brother immediately necessitates consideration of their names (Epimetheus is “who thinks afterwards” and Prometheus

---

<sup>16</sup> Cappizzi (1955, 259–260).

<sup>17</sup> It would be worth remembering Calame's words (2012, 143) that insist on the different meanings of myths: “The stories which we conceive of as myths are rich in this diversity of signification; by the pragmatic dimension of its narrative and discursive realization, it is actualised in a polyphonic context which situates it in opposition to any pretension of a single meaning.” This probably explains the vitality of the myth that lasts until the end of the dialogue.

<sup>18</sup> Manuwald (2003, 54) points to a specific feature of the Platonic myth that connects with this one: the claim of originality made by the narrator of the myth, visible in the myths in the *Politicus* 269b and in the *Phaedrus* 274c. The newness of the proposals is a crucial characteristic in the Platonic myths because the blending of scientific and mythical elements are common in Sophistic and Platonic myths. The differences between both are structural and typological (Manuwald 2003, 56). The myth in Plato has a psychagogue function and works as an enchantment (Manuwald 2003, 58).

<sup>19</sup> There is an important use of personifications in the best remaining example of sophistic myth, the Heracles at the crossroads by Prodicus, narrated by Xenophon in *Memorabilia* II.1.21: Vice and Virtue are personified as women. Plato personifies the Laws in *Crito* 50a–54c. The use of personifications can be considered a feature proper of sophistic myth, Ruiz Yamuza (1997, 224–225).

“who thinks beforehand”), and hence allows an allegorical reading (regarding forethought and afterthought). In comparison to the myth Plato offers in the *Politicus* (268d–274e), the myth in *Protagoras* seems to be simpler in structure and form, conservative with respect to its usage of mythology from the common repository, and devoid of the vivid imaginative elements exhibited by Plato in *Politicus*. The myth in the *Politicus* employs a more complex structure to offer a mythic genealogy of decadence blended with a sort of cosmology. Nothing could be farther from the simple human evolutionary narrative offered in the *Protagoras*. There are, of course, similarities in style and motives—donations, gifts, fire from Prometheus, the techniques from Hephaestus and Athena (τῆς συντέχου), and the addition of seeds and plants from other gods—but all these elements are taken from the mythological encyclopedia, so to speak—they mainly exhibit a common knowledge about mythology shared by all. These points of contact are also present in other literary treatments that reference the evolution of the human being.<sup>20</sup>

Last but not least, another element that establishes a recognizable similarity between this and other myths by Plato is the addressee of the myth: in both cases, the intended audience is young people. This is a crucial feature in Platonic myths and as a characteristic of their literary structure is expressly mentioned in the introductory sentences or closing comments of the myths.<sup>21</sup> In practice, this feature implies that the speaker, as narrator of the myth, occupies a higher intellectual position than the younger listener. Age difference implies the speaker offers instruction, and such instruction offers an appropriate dramatic context for the larger explanation of a city’s political system or laws.<sup>22</sup>

A completely different analysis and mode of reception of the myth occurs, however, in the work of subsequent Neoplatonic commentators. In their opinion the myth is presented as both absolutely Platonic and deeply allegorical. The myth’s authorship is for them so obvious that they do not feel the necessity of

<sup>20</sup> A couple of examples will suffice: the theme of the discovery of agriculture is present in the following authors: Moschion (*Fr.* 6. 9–10), Aeschylus (*Prometheus* 462), Sophocles (*Antigone* 338, 341), Euripides (*Supplices* 205), Ps.-Hippocrates (*De prisca medicina* 3.25–30), and Isocrates (*Panegyricus* 10–28), and in the source of Diodorus (I.8.5). The theme of the building of houses is present in Aeschylus (*Prometheus* 450–451), Sophocles (*Antigone* 357–360), Euripides (*Supplices* 207–208), Moschion (*Fr.* 6. 97), and Diodorus’ source (I.8.5).

<sup>21</sup> There are two ways of expressing the idea: insisting on the short age of the addressee *Plt.* 268e, or on the old age of the narrator. There is a clear association of old women with the narrator of myths in *Grg.* 527a, *R.* 350e, *Tht.* 176b, and *Hp.Ma.* 286a. An ironic shadow is perceived in the idea of conveying relevant pieces of information through the less learned people.

<sup>22</sup> *Lg.* 972d “He, then, that obeys the tale (μύθος) prefixed to the law.”

being precise in naming the myth: Proclus alternatively calls it τῶν ἐν Πρωταγόρᾳ μυθικῶν νοημάτων, or ὁ τοῦ Πρωταγόρου μῦθος, or simply ἐν Πρωταγόρᾳ, as can be seen in the following.

Proclus, *Platonic Theology* 5.87

Let us consider the mythic conceptions in the *Protagoras* (τῶν ἐν Πρωταγόρᾳ μυθικῶν νοημάτων) in common with the *Timaeus*, and conclude if they fit the opinions delivered to us about the great Zeus through the protagorean myth (τὰ διὰ τοῦ Πρωταγορείου μύθου)

Proclus, *Platonic Theology* 5.89–90

Therefore it is not superfluous to prove that it is the demiurgeous, according to Plato, who possesses the first paradigm of the political science. If, however, these things are true, and according to the myth in the *Protagoras* (ὁ τοῦ Πρωταγόρου μῦθος), it should be supposed that politics were firstly in Zeus; it is evident consequently that the demiurgeous of the universe is Zeus.

Proclus, *In Platonis Rempublicam Commentarii* 2.53

It has to be concluded that as they are guides in each one, in the same way one alone has to be in charge of both paths, ascent and descent, and in the generation, of both, the good and bad generation. Should we need to observe my prophecy, only Prometheus should be considered the guide, about whom Plato in the *Protagoras* (Πλάτων ἐν Πρωταγόρᾳ) says that he is ephorus of the rational life as Epimetheus is ephorus of the irrational life.

Plato's myths—in the opinion of Neoplatonists—hold tremendous importance in the dialogues, as the means by which the truths and the central dogmata of the Platonic system were presented in a veiled way.<sup>23</sup> However, it seems that they

<sup>23</sup> Clemens Alexandrinus, *Stromata* V.9.58, 1-6.: "It was not only the Pythagoreans and Plato then, that concealed many things; but the Epicureans too say that they have things that may not be uttered, and do not allow all to peruse those writings. The Stoics also say that by the first Zeno things were written which they do not readily allow disciples to read, without their first giving proof whether or not they are genuine philosophers. And the disciples of Aristotle say that some of their treatises are esoteric, and others common and exoteric. Further, those who instituted the mysteries, being philosophers, buried their doctrines in myths, so as not to be obvious to all. Did they then, by veiling human opinions, prevent the ignorant from handling them; and was it not more beneficial for the holy and blessed contemplation of realities to be concealed? But it was not only the tenets of the Barbarian philosophy, or the Pythagorean myths. But even those myths in Plato (in the *Republic*, that of Hero the Armenian; and in the *Gorgias*, that of Aeacus and Rhada-

have no difficulty in doing the same here, even though the myth in the *Protagoras* is put in Protagoras' mouth, a sophist who can be considered an adversary, whilst other myths are narrated by Socrates or by more sympathetic characters<sup>24</sup> like the visitor from Elis in *Politicus*.

We have to take into consideration that their attribution of the myth to Plato, without hesitation or doubt, is not the result of an in-depth analysis of its content, but rather the product of a larger reading of Plato's complete works, which ignores the historical context of the dialogue, in favor of a larger allegorical reinterpretation centered on the mythological characters and their allegorical reinterpretation. This would appear to be the result of the specific way in which the Neoplatonic school conceives of dialogue as a literary work. For our purposes, because we are particularly interested in the reception of the dialogues made by them, it is especially noteworthy and relevant their conception of character:

*Anonymous Prolegomena XVI*

The characters are not completely historical (for Plato could not have checked every small detail, such as that Socrates bent his leg); nor, on the other hand, is what he says about them completely fictitious (in which case they would not be true to life); but Plato mentions what can help to prove one fact, just as a painter selects the appropriate colours to paint one picture. (Westerink 1962, *ad loc.*)

This indicates a Neoplatonist belief that character in Plato is purely schematization of a real person produced in order to expound the Plato's own philosophical theories, even when the character is historical, like Protagoras.

Two specific aspects should be considered: the authority and persistence of Protagoras himself in the Neoplatonic encyclopedia, and the centrality of the main issues presented in the myth. A survey of Neoplatonic texts that reference Protagoras reveals that most of them promulgate his incomprehensibility theo-

---

manthus; and in the *Phaedo*, that of Tartarus; and in the *Protagoras*, that of Prometheus and Epimetheus; and besides these, that of the war between the Atlantini and the Athenians in the Atlantikum) are to be expounded allegorically, not absolutely in all their expressions, but in those which express the general sense" (translation by P. Schaff). From Aelius Theon's *Progymnasmata* 59.22, 72.28 onwards the definition of myth as μῦθος ἐστὶ λόγος ψευδῆς εἰκονίζων ἀλήθειαν is widespread; cf. Olympiodorus, *In Platonis Gorgiam Commentaria* 46.3.5.

<sup>24</sup> The Neo-Platonists do not pay attention to the evolution of characters in Plato's dialogues. As Rutherford (1995, 275–276) notes, there is an important change in the cast of characters in later dialogues: they are prominent in sciences, as Theaetetus, the gap between character and Plato in ideological terms is narrow, and no obstructive or aggressive figures, as Trasymachus, no conceited sophist, as Gorgias, appear.

ry<sup>25</sup> and some refutations. It is evident that political thought was never a main concern of the Neoplatonic school.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, this is a logical position if we take into account the temporal gap between author and his influential readers and the differing political contexts of Plato and the Neoplatonists—the democratic system ruling Athens, in the V and IV centuries BC, and the political system in Alexandria, in the centuries III to VI AC, when the Neoplatonic school gave classes, which was autocratic and positioned against the schools in the areas of religion and religious feelings.

If the idea of pastiche helps us understand, on the one hand, how the myth in *Protagoras* might render some concepts and statements of Protagoras faithfully while also incorporating Platonic elements, we must also realize any such Platonic elements represent an important and surprising twist, almost a volte-face in the dialogue's later reception. These Platonic elements become the core part, the most relevant piece of information, in the commentaries offered by the Neoplatonists. The Platonic elements introduced in the myth are able to alter the entire meaning of the story, providing something so dramatically opposed to the original Protagorean purposes as to produce complete acceptance by the Neoplatonists, who never take into consideration, in their interpretation of the myth, that Protagoras was a real person, and not a literary device. But it remains immensely difficult to prove beyond any reasonable doubt, with stylistic evidence alone, the authorship. In the case of Plato and the myth of Protagoras, the stylistic structures that could be produced by both of the candidates in question indicate merely a commonality in concerns and fields of inquiry: both thinkers emerged from common fields, one of them immediate, the Sophistic movement, and the other more remote in time, scientific Ionian prose.

### References

- Brisson, L. (1975), "Le mythe de Protagoras. Essai d'analyse structurale," *Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica* 20: 7–37.

<sup>25</sup> The most important aspect in the opinion of commentators is the refutation of ἀκαταληψία, the incomprehensibility, the impossibility of conceiving a thing. Protagoras supposedly was one of the ἐρεκτικοί: people who suspend judgement because it is not possible to know reality. Olimpiodorus, *Prolegomena* 4, includes the refutation by Aristotle.

<sup>26</sup> The theme of the myth is considered political, but in *Theologia Platonica* 1.19 he says that the theme is that of the divinity who takes care of living beings (ἐν δὲ Πρωταγόρῃ περὶ τῆς τῶν θνητῶν ζώων ἀπὸ θεῶν διακοσμήσεως).

- Calame, D. (2012), "Pragmatics of 'Myth' in Plato's Dialogues: The Story of Prometheus in the Protagoras" in C. Collobert, Destrée, P. and González F.J (eds.), *Plato and Myth*. Amsterdam: Brill, 127–143.
- Cappizzi, A. (1955), *Protagora*. Firenze: Sansoni.
- Dyer, R. (2007), *Pastiche*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Friedländer, P. (1969) [1958], *Plato I*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Guthrie, W.K.C. (1969), *A History of Greek Philosophy III*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Heinemann, G. (2003), "Das 'Ordnung' der 'Naturen' (Prot. 320d–321c)," in A. Havlíček, Karfik, F. (eds.), *Protagoras. Proceedings of the Third Symposium Platonicum Pragense*. Prague: Oikoumene, 60–70.
- Heinimann, F. (1945), *Nomos und Physis*. Basel: Reinhardt.
- Lana, I. (1950), "La dottrine di Protagora e di Democrito intorno all' origine dello stato," *RAL* 1950: 185–211.
- Maguire, J. (1977), "Protagoras or Plato II: The Protagoras," *Phronesis* 22: 103–122.
- Manuwald, B. (1996), "Platon oder Protagoras?" in Chr. Mueller-Goldingen *et al.* (eds.), *Festschrift für Carl. Werner Müller*. Stuttgart and Leipzig: de Gruyter, 103–131.
- Manuwald, B. (1999), *Platon, Protagoras*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Manuwald, B. (2003), "Der Mythos im Protagoras und die Platonische Mythopoie," in A. Havlíček, Karfik, F. (eds.), *Plato's Protagoras. Proceedings of the Third Symposium Platonicum Pragense*. Prague: Oikoumene, 39–59.
- Manuwald, B. (2013), "Protagoras' myth in Plato's *Protagoras* Fiction or Testimony?," in J.M. van Ophuijsen *et al.* (eds.), *Protagoras of Abdera. The man. His measure*. Amsterdam: Brill, 163–177.
- Müller, C.W. (1965), "Protagoras über die Götter," *Hermes* 95: 140–159.
- Nestle, W. (1978) [1910], *Plato Protagoras*, herausgegeben und erklärt von W. Nestle. 8. Aufl. Mit Ergänzungen von Heinz Hofmann, Stuttgart: Teubner.
- Ruiz Yamuza, E. (1986), *El mito como estructura formal en Platón*. Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla.
- Ruiz Yamuza, E. (1997), "¿Mito sofístico vs. mito platónico?," in F. Presedo *et al.* (eds.), *Xaîre, Homenaje al profesor Fernando Gascó*. Sevilla: Scriptorium, 213–225.
- Rutherford, R.B. (1995), *The Art of Plato*. Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press.
- Taylor, C.C.W. (1976), *Plato's Protagoras*. Oxford: Oxford Clarendon Press.
- Thesleff, H. (1967), *Studies in the Styles of Plato*. Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Kirjapaino.
- Thein, K. (2003), "Teleology and Myth in the Protagoras," in A. Havlíček, Karfik, F. (eds.), *Plato's Protagoras. Proceedings of the Third Symposium Platonicum Pragense*. Prague: Oikoumene, 60–70.
- Untersteiner, M. (1961), *Sofisti. Testimonianze e Frammenti*, I. Firenze: La Nuova Italia.
- Van Riel, G. (2012), "Religion and Morality. Elements of Plato's Anthropology in the Myth of Prometheus," in C. Collobert, Destrée, P. and González F.J, *Plato and Myth*. Amsterdam: Brill, 145–164.
- Vinagre Lobo, M.A. (2003), "En torno a la datación del tragediógrafo Mosquión y al concepto griego del progreso humano," *Emerita* 71.1: 115–143.
- Westerink, L.G. (1962), *Anonymous Prolegomena to Platonic Philosophy*. Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Company.



# Impiety Avenged: Rewriting Athenian History

JAKUB FILONIK  
University of Warsaw

In sources from various periods of antiquity we can find numerous remarks concerning the trials for ἀσέβεια (“impiety”) that reportedly took place in fifth- and fourth-century Athens. Despite several notorious trials well attested in the contemporary sources, these remarks can often be dated many centuries later than the actual events that they describe, sometimes even as late as the biographical writings of Diogenes Laertius (ca. 3rd century CE) or Plutarch (1st/2nd century CE), neither of whom was particularly careful in his approach to the sources. This essay argues that some of these cases follow a pattern of constructing ancient fake testimonies of the past and, as such, they display numerous shared features relating to their fictive nature.

The first to raise serious doubts about the value of these testimonies *in extenso* was Dover (1976) in his paper on the freedom of intellectuals in ancient Greece, followed by important general remarks on Hellenistic biography by Lefkowitz (1981, 110–111 *et al.* and 1987) and Stone (1988), and a more detailed study of selected fifth-century cases by Wallace (1994). Here, I would like to go one step further in calling the surviving testimonies into question. In order to give a more detailed picture of the methods of ancient biographers and scholars, I will focus in this essay on four cases of the use of fake source material in the descriptions of the trials allegedly held in classical Athens. First, I argue that some of these trials almost certainly did not take place, while traditions that refer to those possibly authentic most likely included numerous fictitious additions. Second, I intend to highlight the shared features of the cases described below. Third, I discuss possible reasons for the emergence and re-use of those inauthentic testimonies. Finally, I tentatively suggest some new arguments concerning

legal issues connected with the early impiety trials.<sup>1</sup> The four cases in question are those of Aspasia, Protagoras, Euripides, and Phryne.

First, let us have a look at a particularly revealing passage from Diogenes Laertius, which proves to be very informative on the methods of ancient biographers describing events dating back to the classical period:

Of the trial of Anaxagoras different accounts are given. Sotion in his *Succession of the Philosophers* says that he was indicted by Cleon on a charge of impiety, because he declared the sun to be a mass of red-hot metal; that his pupil Pericles defended him, and he was fined five talents and banished. Satyrus in his *Lives* says that the prosecutor was Thucydides,<sup>2</sup> the opponent of Pericles, and the charge one of treasonable correspondence with Persia as well as of impiety; and that sentence of death was passed on Anaxagoras by default. When news was brought him that he was condemned and his sons were dead, his comment on the sentence was, "Long ago nature condemned both my judges and myself to death"; and on his sons, "I knew that my children were born to die." Some, however, tell this story of Solon, and others of Xenophon. That he buried his sons with his own hands is asserted by Demetrius of Phalerum in his work *On Old Age*. Hermippus<sup>3</sup> in his *Lives* says that he was confined in the prison pending his execution; that Pericles came forward and asked the people whether they had any fault to find with him in his own public career; to which they replied that they had not. "Well," he continued, "I am a pupil of Anaxagoras; do not then be carried away by slanders and put him to death. Let me prevail upon you to release him." So he was released; but he could not brook the indignity he had suffered and committed suicide. Hieronymus in the second book of his *Scattered Notes* states that Pericles brought him into court so weak and wasted from illness that he owed his acquittal not so much to the merits of his case as to the sympathy of the judges. So much then on the subject of his trial.

---

<sup>1</sup> The content of this essay has been supplemented by Filonik (2013) which focuses on legal and socio-political aspects of the impiety accusations in classical Athens, and includes a detailed discussion of the less clear-cut cases, such as those of Anaxagoras, Diagoras, and some fourth-century trials. The project from which the present paper emerges has been funded by the National Science Centre, Poland based on the decision number DEC2012/07/N/HS2/00967. The research has been also supported by the Foundation for Polish Science (FNP).

<sup>2</sup> For controversies on Thucydides, son of Melesias, anti-Periclean opposition in Athens, and Plutarch's account of these "events," see Andrewes 1978; Raaflaub 2000, 98–100.

<sup>3</sup> *FGrHist* IV A 3, 1026 T 6 b = F 65. For Hermippus' of Smyrna methods in his biographical writing, see e.g. Bollansée 1999a: 118ff., 182–84.

[...] At length he retired to Lampsacus and there died. (D. L. 2.12–14; trans. R. D. Hicks).

Here, we are given several variants of—apparently—the same events, which demonstrate the author’s complete lack of ability to assess the sources available to him. As if presenting these four variants as equally plausible were not confusing enough, the biographer simply adds that Anaxagoras died at Lampsacus. To support this statement, Diogenes Laertius (2.15) further “quotes” the inscription from the philosopher’s grave, followed by a more elaborate epigram written by our biographer, which, again, focuses on the trial resulting in the philosopher’s death(!) For the story to be rendered more appealing, he includes (1) gnomic quotations—ascribed to various authors—which offer a brilliant summary of the famous person’s death, (2) witty dialogues with renowned figures (in this instance, Pericles) who are introduced only to offer aid to the central character, and (3) the authority of earlier authors merged into one ostensibly coherent narrative.

In his *Life of Pericles* (32), Plutarch mentions the charge of ἀσέβεια against Aspasia, the concubine of Pericles. According to the biographer, the case was brought by Hermippus the comic writer (not his Hellenistic namesake just mentioned), who claimed that Aspasia was helping free women to rendezvous with Pericles. The latter was also said to have helped in her acquittal by shedding a flood of tears over her fate before the dicasts (a story Plutarch attributes to Aeschines of Sphettus). The biographer most likely transferred the stage humor of the comic writer Hermippus to an imaginary lawsuit.<sup>4</sup> It would otherwise be an isolated example from classical Athens of a comic poet repeating his insults from the stage in court. A weeping Pericles seems an easily adaptable motif for a play. Anecdotes about Aspasia’s conduct could have also been easily drawn out of anti-Periclean polemics found in Plato and other literary sources.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, both Aspasia and Pericles were under constant fire from comic writers,<sup>6</sup> while Hermippus, from what we can tell based on the extant fragments, was especially keen on taking jibes at Pericles and at his alleged debauchery (fr. 47 PCG). Moreover, Plutarch’s plot is set within a larger narrative of scandals con-

<sup>4</sup> Hermippus and other comic poets are the usual suspects, see e.g. Lefkowitz 1987, 157; Podlecki 1998, 116–117; Raaflaub 2000, 101–107. See also Wallace 1994, 131–132, along with the bibliography cited in n. 16, who mentions a fourth-century Socratic philosopher Aeschines of Sphettus, the author of a dialogue entitled *Aspasia* (SSR VI A 59–72) cited by Plutarch, as a probable source of the story, apparently continuing the tradition of philosophical invective and making some references to comedies.

<sup>5</sup> Gomme 1945, 65–70; Raaflaub 2000, 107.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Schwarze 1971, 110–113, *passim*; Henry 1995, 19–28; Vickers 1997.

cerning the “circle of Pericles.” The first to explicitly speak of *false* accusations issued against Pericles and his circle by comic poets was, in fact, Plutarch himself (*Per.* 13.9–10). Lefkowitz (1981, 110–111), having analyzed Hellenistic “lives of the poets” in detail, has suggested that Athenian impiety trials—and the trial of Aspasia in particular—were a product of imagination of later biographers who made efforts to prove that the trial of Socrates had not been the first “ideological” trial in Athens. Earlier prosecution of “freethinkers” might then be seen to form a precedent for sentencing the philosopher, which would prove useful for any narrative that preferred to present his case as part of a general tendency in Athenian democracy.

Not only the trials themselves but also the decrees connected with the accusation of impiety could have been falsified later in antiquity. Apart from the linguistic and cultural arguments already raised against the historicity of the so-called “decree of Diopeithes,”<sup>7</sup> we must consider legal chronology, which seems to be the crucial here. The decree, found only in Plutarch (*Per.* 32), was allegedly meant to be targeted at Anaxagoras and said that anyone dealing with the celestial matters (τὰ μετάρσια) should be prosecuted by the procedure of εἰσαγγελία. Yet out of dozens of certain or plausible cases of the employment of this procedure in the fifth and fourth centuries, only five were dated by Hansen (1975, 69–71) to the period preceding the Peloponnesian War. Each time, they were aimed at a single citizen, not a group, and emerged from the accusation of treason, and even those five trials were listed as εἰσαγγελίαι by Hansen based on tentative assumptions, without any definitive proof offered by the wording of the extant sources.

One should also note that many documents preserved in the literary sources as reportedly “classical” have been recognized as forgeries inserted into the manuscripts of earlier works by the Alexandrian and later scholars.<sup>8</sup> The tradition of fake decrees in fact has a long and fruitful history, as countless manuscripts of Athenian court speeches did not carry the text of laws, oaths, and witness testimonies, thus calling for their supplementation. This means that we need to assess each and every one of them based on our present historical knowledge and other material surviving (including those inscriptions which have been proven to be authentic).

Another case that is particularly interesting when analyzed through the lens of the surviving testimonies is one of Protagoras of Abdera (ca. 490–ca. 421? BCE), reportedly charged with impiety and either killed or exiled from Athens,

<sup>7</sup> See Dover 1976, 39–41; Wallace 1994, 137–138; Lefkowitz 1981, 110 *et al.*

<sup>8</sup> On the documents preserved in Athenian oratory, see e.g. Canevaro and Harris 2012; Canevaro 2013.

while his books were allegedly burnt by the Athenians. This famous sophist was the author of the treatise *On the Gods*, illustrating the principles of his agnosticism (Cic. *N. D.* 1.63, Sext. *Emp. Math.* 9.56; F 4 D-K *ap. D. L.* 9.51). All available sources on his trial not only come from a later period but are also mostly dubious. The earliest of them was written four centuries after the events it describes supposedly took place. In his dialogue *De Natura Deorum* (1.63), Cicero juxtaposes Protagoras with Diagoras and Theodorus, famous Greek “atheists.” He tells us that Protagoras sentenced by the Athenians was exiled out of Attic soil (*urbe atque agro*) and that his writings were publicly burnt during the meeting of the Assembly (*in contione*). A century later Flavius Josephus (T 19 D-K *ap. Joseph. Ap.* 2.265) wrote that Protagoras had escaped the city just in time, coming within a hair’s breadth of losing his life after the Athenians had decided to kill him for his writings about the gods, after finding them to be incongruous with their own beliefs.

In his *Life of Nicias* (23.4), Plutarch also mentions Protagoras and his flight from Athens, and compares his case with those of Anaxagoras and Socrates. In the treatise *Against the Mathematicians* (i.e. “scholars” in general), Sextus Empiricus (ca. 160–ca. 210 CE) says that Protagoras was condemned to death by the Athenians, and died in a shipwreck when trying to escape<sup>9</sup> (T 12 D-K *ap. Sext. Emp.* 9.56). He adds that Timon of Phlius (3rd century BCE) mentions this episode in Book II of his satirical *Silloi* (fr. 5 Diels = fr. 5 Di Marco), where he claims that the Athenians would burn Protagoras’ books because of what he had written about the gods. Even if we turn a blind eye to the frequently raised objections regarding Sextus’ careless habits concerning citations from earlier philosophers, we should note that Timon was another author famous for both relishing and repeating scandalous—and usually untrustworthy—tales of the past.<sup>10</sup> Finally, Diogenes Laertius asserts (T 1 D-K *ap. D. L.* 9.52) that because of Protagoras’ treatise “the Athenians expelled him; and they burnt his works in the market-place, after sending round a herald to collect them from all who had copies in their possession” (trans. R. D. Hicks). The biographer further describes the circumstances of this event (Arist. fr. 67 Rose<sup>3</sup> = fr. 867 Gigon = Philochorus *FGrHist* 328 F 217 *ap. D. L.* 9.54):

<sup>9</sup> A fate commonly ascribed to the impious throughout antiquity, cf. Nestle 1948, 584 *passim*.

<sup>10</sup> He wrote that Plato has committed plagiarism by adopting in his *Timaeus* the matter from a Pythagorean treatise (fr. 54 Diels = fr. 54 Di Marco *ap. Gell.* 3.17.4), cf. Wallace 1994, 149, n. 33; on Timon’s *Silloi* and its reception see also Clayman 2009, 75–173.

The first of his books he read in public was that *On the Gods*, the introduction to which we quoted above; he read it at Athens in Euripides' house, or, as some say, in Megacledes'; others again make the place the Lyceum and the reader his disciple Archagoras, Theodotus's son, who gave him the benefit of his voice. His accuser was Pythodorus, son of Polyzelus, one of the four hundred; Aristotle, however, says it was Euathlus. (trans. R. D. Hicks)

We cannot be sure what trial Aristotle, if cited correctly by Diogenes, had in mind; mentioning a different name for the prosecutor arouses our suspicion. Diogenes Laertius (9.56; cf. Gell. 5.10.3) makes Protagoras and Euathlus the opposing parties in a different quarrel, this time over a due payment, perhaps indicating a confusion in the biographer's account (Lenfant 2002, 148–149). He also seems to confuse the role of heralds in democratic Athens with that of imperial magistrates at his time. Another striking and suspect feature of these testimonies is their ascription of the tradition of book-burning to the Greeks of the classical period. As demonstrated by Dover (1976) and Wallace (1996), this was a Roman, not a Greek mode of dealing with individuals and groups perceived as threatening to the state or social order.<sup>11</sup>

This difference is best summarized by Plato, who—had any of this ever happened—would have been the first to draw comparisons to his beloved teacher sentenced by the Athenians to death. In his *Protagoras*, the old sophist speaks of himself by admitting that he has never met any trouble because of his profession (T 5 D-K *ap. Pl. Prot.* 317b–c):

[...] So I have gone quite the opposite way from these others, and I admit that I am a sophist and that I educate people; I think that an admission of that kind is a better precaution than a denial. And I've taken other precautions as well, so that, touch wood, I've never come to any harm through admitting to being a sophist. And yet I've been practising the craft for many years (and indeed I'm a good age now, I'm old enough to be the father of any of you). (trans. C. C. W. Taylor)

Furthermore, in *Meno* (T 8 D-K *ap. Pl. Men.* 91d–e), Socrates replies to Anytus' claims that one should avoid mixing with the sophists to avoid corruption by saying that Protagoras enjoyed a good reputation throughout his whole life as a

<sup>11</sup> Stone 1998, 232 summarises it briefly: "The frequent expulsion of philosophers and other Greek teachers from Rome is well attested, and it was natural for writers of that time to assume that the Athenians were equally suspicious and intolerant. That also suited their contempt for democracy," cf. Wallace 1996, 237–238.

sophist. He adds, perhaps ironically, that the philosopher would not have been able to deceive his pupils for such a long period of time by claiming that he has helped them become better. After confronting the testimonies from late antiquity with this almost contemporary source concerning Protagoras, we must assume that Plutarch and Diogenes Laertius drew upon Hellenistic biography with its constant search for thrilling motifs and eagerness to invent sensational details to support them. In short, the trial of Protagoras and all its circumstances seem highly doubtful, while all the testimonies that mention it are late, mostly anecdotal, and mutually contradictory.

A somewhat different trial mentioned by ancient authors that also raises numerous questions involving an accusation made against Euripides. According to Satyrus' *Life of Euripides* (T 99 Kannicht = F 6 Schorn *ap.* P. Oxy. 9.1176 fr. 39 col. X), the tragedian was accused of ἀσέβεια by Cleon. The scholia to *The Frogs* (Σ Ar. *Ran.* 1302) juxtapose the prosecutions of Socrates and Euripides when commenting on the person of Meletus. Everything indicates that the legend about Euripides' prosecution was a popular one in antiquity, appearing on a 3rd-century CE list of rhetorical exercises that reads: "Euripides, after portraying Heracles mad in a play staged at the Dionysia, is being prosecuted for impiety" (T 100 Kannicht *ap.* P. Oxy. 2400). The image of "impious Euripides" has probably been forged based on philosophical—and often surprising—views about the gods that many of his characters express. Aristophanes was one of the first to advance this critique against the poet on literary grounds. The tragedian was then easily merged throughout antiquity with both Socrates and Anaxagoras (Lefkowitz 1987, 154–155).

Perhaps Aristotle, too, added to the legend by stating in his *Rhetoric* (3.15.8, 1416a28–35) that the line from Euripides' *Hippolytus* (612) that reads "my tongue swore, but not my mind" was used against the poet in the trial of ἀντίδοσις in which Hygiaenon called him impious (ἀσέβης). According to Aristotle, "Euripides replied that Hygiaenon himself did wrong by transferring the judgments of the Festival of Dionysus to the law courts; for there he had given an account of these words, or would again if Hygiaenon wished to accuse him there" (trans. H. C. Lawson-Tancred). Yet the procedure of ἀντίδοσις concerned the exchange of property, meaning that such an accusation of being 'impious' would have been made purely as a rhetorical argument (in this case, apparently slanderous), rather than as a formal charge. We cannot even be certain if the speech had ever been delivered in court, or if, from the very beginning, it was just a rhetorical exercise containing this anecdotal reply. Nothing suggests that the poet could have been sentenced. Even the *Life of Euripides* by Satyrus, a work always looking for a reason to give the sensational version of the story,

does not say a single word about such a charge, thus giving us a further reason to believe that Euripides' trial for impiety itself was yet another later invention of imaginative biographers.

With respect to the tradition of testimonies, the most interesting fourth-century impiety trial seems to be one of the hetaera Phryne (ca. 350–345?<sup>12</sup>). Late sources—analyzed in detail and with some interesting guesswork by (Cooper 1995)—give a variety of reasons for which Phryne was said to have been accused of impiety by Euthias and defended by the famous orator Hyperides (ca. 390–322 BCE). The title of the unpreserved defense speech is given among some brief remarks as *In defense of Phryne*, Ὑπὲρ Φρόνης (fr. 171–80 Jensen). One of the first surviving testimonies concerning Phryne's trial comes from a comedy *The Woman from Ephesus* by Poseidippus of Cassandreia (3rd century BCE), as cited by Athenaeus (fr. 13 PCG ap. Athen. XIII, 591e–f), and describes a scene quite difficult to imagine in an Athenian courtroom:

Before our time, Phryne was far and away the best-known / courtesan there was; because even if you're / younger than that, you've heard about her trial. / Even though they thought she did terrible damage to people's lives, / she captured the court when she was tried on a capital charge; / and by taking the jurors' hands, one by one, / she saved her life—although just barely—with her tears (trans. D. Olson).

Athenaeus (XIII, 590d–f; cf. 591a–f) provides a popular version of the story, when speaking of Hyperides' erotic life:

Phryne was from Thespieae, and when Euthias successfully indicted her, she escaped the death penalty; Euthias was so angry about this that he never argued another case, according to Hermippus [*FGrHist* IV A 3, 1026 F 46a]. Hyperides spoke in support of Phryne [fr. 178 Jensen], and when his speech accomplished nothing, and the jurors seemed likely to convict her, he brought her out in public, ripped her dress to shreds, exposed her chest, and at the conclusion of his speech produced cries of lament as he gazed at her, causing the jurors to feel a superstitious fear of this priestess and temple-attendant of Aphrodite, and to give in to pity rather than put her to death. Afterward, when she had been acquitted, a decree was passed to the effect that no speaker was to lament on another person's behalf, and that no ac-

<sup>12</sup> See Cooper 306, n. 10 on the date between ca. 350 and 340 BCE. For the question of identity of Phryne, see Raubitschek 1941, trial 903–907.



cused man or woman was to be put on display while their case was being decided. (trans. S. Douglas Olson; notes JF)

The decree cited in this account—a second curious ψήφισμα—is, apparently, another forgery. The narrative makes one recall Plutarch's tale of the tears shed by Pericles in front of the dicasts during the trial of Aspasia. There is no mention here, though, of the basis for such an accusation, just as there is none in Pseudo-Plutarch's note in *The Lives of the Ten Orators* (849e), which only mentions briefly that the hetaera Phryne was tried for impiety (ἄσεβεῖν), and the dicasts, on seeing her breasts revealed by the orator, acquitted her for her beauty. According to Athenaeus (590d), Hyperides was supposed to begin his speech by saying that he came in support of the courtesan due to their close relationship.

Both Athenaeus and Pseudo-Plutarch, while commenting on this story in works otherwise full of scandals, memorable observations, and gossip, admit that they found it in the *Life of Hyperides* (of ca. 200 BCE) by Hermippus of Smyrna, who had, in turn, taken it from Idomeneus of Lampsacus (active ca. 300 BCE). These two fragmentarily preserved Hellenistic biographers spoke of it in the context of Hyperides' love-affairs that Pseudo-Plutarch and Athenaeus paraphrase in a similar fashion (Cooper 1995, 305, n. 7). Both also speak of numerous hetaerae with which the orator was said to be acquainted. Bollansée (1999b, 388; cf. 385) believes that the dramatic description of Phryne's trial and its finale could have been an authorial invention of Hermippus—known for his fondness for smuggling sensational plots into the quasi-historical narrative<sup>13</sup>—after he had made a collage of various works. Idomeneus, too, treated his sources rather lightly, and was eager to attribute intemperate sexual taste not only to Hyperides but also Demosthenes (fr. 12). Most likely, the tale about their courtroom standoff was invented on the basis of the aforementioned oration by Hyperides (cf. Alciph. 4.3, 4.4), which was very popular throughout antiquity; it was even translated into Latin and recalled with admiration by Pseudo-Longinus (34.3) and Quintilian (*Inst.* 10.5.2) in their rhetorical treatises.

In fact, the speech was so popular, it has to be assumed it was stored in the Library of Alexandria, where Hermippus, Callimachus' assiduous pupil, could access it and use it for inventing a melodramatic coup de theatre (Bollansée 1999a, 385–88). It also appeared in rhetorical exercises, which would give further occasion for additional details and circumstances to enter the tradition con-

<sup>13</sup> For Hermippus' search for sensational events and circumstances of death, and his tendency to add fictitious details, see Bollansée 1999a, 118ff., 182–84; Mejer 1978, 32; see also quotations from Hermippus in Diogenes Laertius who eagerly used excerpts from Hermippus' works.

cerning the trial. The author of the anonymous treatise on rhetoric (Rhet. Gr. I 390 Spengel-Hammer *ap.* Anon. Segu. Τέχνη ῥητορική 215) furthermore cites a fragment of the alleged speech by Euthias, the authorship of which was a matter of dispute already in antiquity, which specifies the charge of ἀσέβεια for introducing new gods, revelry in the Lyceum and leading some, perhaps orgiastic, religious parades (θίασοι), consisting of both men and women. Later sources supplement this by saying that Phryne tried to introduce the god Isodaites to Athens.<sup>14</sup>

The disrobing episode resembles a tragic scene, especially one with suppliants or captive women. A woman appears, being dragged in her shredded vestment, then she pleads for mercy in a fashion similar to a character in a tragic *komos* lamenting her fate.<sup>15</sup> Several anonymous treatises on rhetoric speak of such a lament and of the “tearing the robes” during Phryne’s trial, which biographers could have understood as the orator’s stripping off of Phryne’s clothes. Hellenistic biographers writing about the famous hetaera could thus have drawn just as easily from tragedy as from comedy. It seems possible that, even if the trial of Phryne did take place, the speech in her defense could have also been composed as an exercise. While it might have included a charge of impiety, this remains purely speculative: we can be sure of neither the procedure nor the motive, and we can only hypothesize regarding the date. Unfortunately, despite the fame of this oration in antiquity, only fragments have survived. Since the authors of the extant theoretical treatises on rhetoric did not express any doubts concerning the oration’s authenticity, there is fair reason to believe that Hyperides indeed wrote it. But the highly unusual circumstances of the trial must be regarded as purely anecdotal.

It appears that while some trials were entirely fabricated by Hellenistic and later biographers, others might have taken place, but their circumstances were long lost and had to be reinvented. We also know of some fourth-century impiety trials of lesser-known figures of Athenian public life that ended with the acquittal of the defendant and were nowhere near famous later in antiquity.<sup>16</sup> The inauthentic trials seem to have been fabricated for a variety of reasons. First, the biographers’ perceived audience was a large one, similar to that of the modern-

<sup>14</sup> Hsch. s.v. Ἰσοδαίτης; Harp. s.v. Ἰσοδαίτης [= fr. 177 Jensen; cf. fr. 174–176] (according to Harpocration, mainly women of ill repute). See also O’Connell 2013 for an interesting yet highly speculative argument that Poll. 8.123–124 speaking of the Mysteries is a part of Hyperides’ *Defence of Phryne*.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Cooper 1995, 312; cf. Arist. *Poet.* 1452b12, Soph. *Ant.* 891–928, 937–943; Eur. *Andr.* 628, Ar. *Lys.* 628; cf. Hall 1995, 43.

<sup>16</sup> See e.g. Dem. 57.8, Lycurg. fr. 14.1 Conomis; cf. Dem. 22.2, 24.7, which could have been just a διαβολή against Androtion.

day tabloids. This desire to appeal to a large readership necessitated an increased emphasis on sensational or jokey stories relating to the lives of ancient celebrities (blood, death, erotic life, sudden turns of events, and amusing curiosities all fall into this category). One of the favorite genres for the combination of these elements was, of course, comedy. When tragedies or philosophical treatises could prove to be rather dry in respect of autobiographical elements, we may assume that biographers fabricated the missing elements by taking words out of their proper context, sometimes misquoting them deliberately, or entirely rewording their sources. Ancient biographers were happy to include whatever material they found fitting for the portrayal of character, and eagerly employed a creative approach in relation to figures known for their controversial beliefs, such as Socrates or Euripides. If they knew about the trial of the former, any incidental link between the two could prove to be enough to adapt its details in dramatizing the life of the latter. Such events, invented on the basis of their supposed likelihood, ultimately rested upon certain political assumptions and at the same time were meant to prove them, especially in regard to the characteristics of the *demos* and democracy. Furthermore, there may be a broader pattern that can be distinguished here, exemplifying how the cultural memory develops. As Milan Kundera notes in his *Ignorance*, what survived of Goethe in the collective consciousness is a—most likely fabricated—dying exclamation “More light!” rather than the subtleties of his prose or thought. This pattern does not seem to be very different in antiquity.

Ancient scholars, too, found many ways to invent circumstances that would show the character of the portrayed person based on a widely understood “likelihood” (τὸ εἰκός).<sup>17</sup> They used their sources freely, frequently paraphrased them under the guise of citations, more often than not when making use of recent popular excerpts instead of reading original authors (cf. Plin. *Epist.* III 5, 10 on Pliny the Elder: *liber legebatur, adnotabat excerpebatque. Nihil enim legit, quod non excerperet*). These extracts were regularly written down without proper context, or transferred from one to another purely on the basis of a resemblance to a different source or subject; quite often the original meaning was long lost and hence misunderstood.<sup>18</sup>

Many “biographical” tales were invented by Hellenistic and later biographers simply on the basis of the content of the *works* left by the authors whose lives at that point remained otherwise undocumented (Lefkowitz 1981). In this, biographers widely cited all available sources, including comic and oratorical

<sup>17</sup> See Hägg 2012, 67–98; cf. Bing 1993 for Hellenistic and later attempts to “dramatise” biographies.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Mejer 1978, 7–29; Fairweather 1974; Bollansée 1999b, 384, with n. 17.

invective, without applying any critical method, and apparently following the principle “se non è vero, è ben trovato.” A few notable examples of such an approach are given by Dover (1976, 28–34). For example, in his *Life of Euripides* (F 6 Schorn fr. 39 col. X), Satyrus treats the plot of Aristophanes’ *Thesmophoriazousae*, in which the Athenian women conspire together against Euripides, as a description of a historical event.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, if we were to believe Plutarch’s account (*Per.* 35) of Pericles’ attempt to overcome his great superstitious fear of the solar eclipse during the arrangements for the naval expedition against Epidaurus at the beginning of the Peloponnesian War, we would have to discredit Thucydides’ version of the story (2.56), according to which the expedition took place in the summer of 430, because the nearest solar eclipse (mentioned in Thuc. 2.28) was in August of 431 (Munro 1919). There are plentiful examples of such “mistakes” in ancient biography and historiography.

The question of intermediaries also should not be neglected, for late biographers had not always read the authors whom they “cited,” preferring to use quotations from other works—a fact that problematizes the question of their immediate sources, a phenomenon especially noteworthy in the case of Diogenes Laertius.<sup>20</sup> Plutarch, for example, in his selection of sources willingly made references to the testimonies of other historians, but in his often anecdotal narrative he frequently followed comic writers, especially when describing sensational events concerning ancient celebrities. Plutarch’s “unrestrained” use of sources in his *Lives* included merging different accounts that appeared similar, chronological shifts, inventing the supporting details, and other analogous techniques.<sup>21</sup>

It is commonly recognized that biography bears a strong connection not only to historiography but also epideictic oratory, and follows its patterns of praise and blame. This tendency is even more pronounced in antiquity. Plutarch, as many of his fellow writers, did not attempt to conceal the moralizing purpose of his biographies, by means of which he wished to reveal the “virtue and wickedness” of their characters, ready to sketch timeless moral exempla (*παραδείγματα*), which should be enough of a warning to the critical reader.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, he openly believed the aristocratic government to be the best and—like many of his contemporaries—followed Plato rather than Athenian

<sup>19</sup> See also Lefkowitz 1987, 152; Wallace 1994, 131, with the bibliography cited in n. 17.

<sup>20</sup> Goulet 1997, 151–156; Bollansée 2001, 64–72; Mejer 1978; Gigante 1986; Moraux 1986, 252–253.

<sup>21</sup> Pelling 1979 and 1980; but see Pelling 1992 for a more approving tone; cf. Gomme 1945, 58–59.

<sup>22</sup> His moralising aim is clearly stated in introductions to the *Lives* of Aemilius Paulus and Pericles, see *Plu. Aem.* 1.1–3, *Per.* 1.3–4, 2.1–3; cf. Hägg 2012, 272–277; Gomme 1945, 54–57.

democrats, which had to significantly influence his view of classical Athens; this trait may be seen in almost all of his descriptions of the Athenian *demos*.<sup>23</sup> He also tried to add some excitement to his plots by following (occasionally with a certain naïveté) the general tendency of Hellenistic and later biography, which resulted in his vivid but historically ambiguous *Lives*.

Historical accuracy in the descriptions of classical Athens was also not the forte of the author of our first testimony to the trials in the “circle of Pericles,” Diodorus.<sup>24</sup> He, too, perceived historiography clearly as a moralistic and epideictic genre, with its most notable individuals deliberately offered as examples for posterity; he thus generally favored outstanding individuals and portrayed them as opposed by nature to the “crowd.”<sup>25</sup> Diodorus saw in Athens the fate of countless empires—gradual decline of moral principles and tyrannical aspirations rising along with military growth. Sketching a similar scenario for Athens was not particularly challenging. Remarks found in his Hellenistic sources based on anti-Periclean rhetoric were enough to form Book XII of the *Library*, with its emphasis on whatever gave support to the Thucydidean view of the Peloponnesian War as the “severest of Athenian defeats.”

The testimonies from late antiquity concerning the impiety trials more often than not reveal their authors’ incomprehension of the political and social reality of classical Athens. The way classical authors speak of impiety does not seem to indicate the need to conceal information about it out of fear of transgressing a taboo (ἀπόρητα), even if the events themselves were not always eagerly recalled. We thus need to conclude that the abundance of such information in later writings in connection with the lack of similar remarks in the works of prolific classical authors ought to be considered highly suspicious. We may, of course, assume that such events were not the main interest of a certain author or genre (and thus of the audience), yet in comparison with a vast number of more or less evident examples of comic invective repeated by Hellenistic and later biographers it all appears as a subsidiary concern.

Based on four exemplary cases, I have argued in this essay that much of the testimony—including laws—found in late sources regarding Athenian impiety trials need to be regarded with the proper amount of skepticism, and much might simply be deemed forgery. These cases demonstrate a set of shared features, all of which apparently derive from techniques used to write several centuries later

<sup>23</sup> See e.g. Plut. *Thes.* 25, *Cam.* 36, *Tim.* 37, *Mar.* 38; cf. Russell 1966.

<sup>24</sup> On Diodorus’ use of sources, see, e.g., Drews 1962; Palm 1955, 15–63; Sacks 1994 and 1990, 77, *passim*.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Wirth 1993, 26–32; on Diodorus’ moral assumptions (“history as a moral force”), see Sacks 1994, 81–82, 93–108, 215, 229 *et al.*

about classical Athens. The historiographical and biographical works of, for example, Diodorus, Plutarch, or Diogenes Laertius—with their stylistic resemblance to similar Hellenistic writings—present a version of the past designed to appeal to contemporary readers in ways that makes them less than reliable from the perspective of modern critical methodology. Thus it appears that, as a general rule of thumb, it is safest to approach these sources—narrative and documentary alike—with particular skepticism in assessing their reliability for the political history of classical Greece. Even if their utility is limited in establishing historical truth regarding Athenian impiety trials, recognizing their deliberate or unintentional distortions, and evaluating them accordingly, can render them useful in themselves as examples of ancient historiographical techniques and tendencies, and in studying how certain forgeries are brought to life.

### References

*FGrHist* = (Bollansée 1999)

- Andrewes, A. (1978), "The Opposition to Perikles," *JHS* 98: 1–8.
- Bing, Peter. (1993), "The Bios-Tradition and Poets' Lives in Hellenistic Poetry." Rosen, Ralph M. and Joseph Farrell. *Nomodeiktēs: Greek Studies in Honor of Martin Ostwald*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 619–631.
- Bollansée, Jan. (1999), *Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker Continued. Part 4, Biography and Antiquarian Literature. IVA, Biography. Fascicle 3, Hermippos of Smyrna*. Leiden: Brill.
- (1999), *Hermippos of Smyrna and his Biographical Writings: A Reappraisal*. Leuven: Peeters.
- (2001), "Animadversiones in Diogenem Laertium," *RhM*: 64–106.
- Canevaro, Mirko and Edward M. Harris. (2012), "The Documents in Andocides' On The Mysteries," *CQ* 62: 98–129.
- Canevaro, Mirko. (2013), *The Documents in the Attic Orators: Laws and Decrees in the Public Speeches of the Demosthenic Corpus*. Oxford: Oxford University.
- Clayman, Dee L. (2009), *Timon of Phlius: Pyrrhonism into Poetry*. Berlin: Gruyter.
- Cooper, Craig R. (1995), "Hyperides and the Trial of Phryne," *Phoenix* 49: 303–318.
- Dover, Kenneth James. (1976), "The Freedom of the Intellectual in Greek Society," *Talanta* 7: 24–54.
- (1988), "Anecdotes, Gossip and Scandal." Dover, Kenneth James. *The Greeks and Their Legacy: Prose Literature, History, Society, Transmission, Influence*. Vol. 2. Oxford: Blackwell, 45–52.
- Drews, Robert. (1962), "Diodorus and His Sources," *AJPh* 83.4: 383–392.
- Fairweather, Janet. (1974), "Fiction in the Biographies of Ancient Writers," *AncSoc* 5: 231–275.
- Filonik, Jakub. (2013), "Athenian Impiety Trials: A Reappraisal," *Dike* 16: 11–96.
- Gigante, Marcello. (1986), "Biografia e Dossografia in Diogene Laerzio," *Elenchos* 7: 7–102.

- Gomme, A. W. (1945–1981), *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides*. Vol. 1. Oxford: Clarendon.
- Goulet, Richard. (1997), “Les Références chez Diogène Laërce: Sources ou Autorités.” Freddouille, Jean-Claude et al. *Titres et Articulations du Texte dans les Oeuvres Antiques: Actes du Colloque International de Chantilly 13–15 décembre 1994*. Paris: Institut des Études Augustiniennes, 149–166.
- Hägg, Thomas. (2012), *The Art of Biography in Antiquity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hall, Edith. (1995), “Lawcourt Dramas. The Power of Performance in Greek Forensic Oratory,” *BICS* 40: 39–58.
- Hansen, Mogens Herman. (1975), *Eisangelia: The Sovereignty of the People’s Court in Athens in the Fourth Century*. Odense: Odense Universitetsforlag.
- Henry, Madeleine M. (1995), *Prisoner of History: Aspasia of Miletus and her Biographical Tradition*. Oxford: Oxford University.
- Hicks, R.D. (1959), *Diogenes Laertius, Lives of Eminent Philosophers, vol. I*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Jensen, Christian (1917), *Hyperidis orationes sex cum ceterarum fragmentis*. Leipzig: Teubner.
- Lawson-Tancred, H. C. (2004), *Aristotle: The Art of Rhetoric*, repr. with updated Bibliography. London: Penguin Books.
- Lefkowitz, Mary R. (1981), *The Lives of the Greek Poets*. London: Duckworth.
- (1987), “Was Euripides an Atheist?” *SIFC* 5: 149–166.
- Lenfant, Dominique. (2002), “Protagoras et son Procès d’Impiété: Peut-on Soutenir une Thèse et son Contraire?” *Ktema* 27: 133–154.
- Mejer, Jørgen. (1978), *Diogenes Laertius and his Hellenistic Background*. Wiesbaden: Steiner.
- Moraux, Paul. (1986), “Diogène Laërce et le Péripatos,” *Elenchos* 7: 245–294.
- Munro, J. A. R. (1919), “Thucydides on the Third of August, 431 B.C.,” *CQ* 13: 127–128.
- Nestle, Wilhelm. (1948), *Griechische Studien: Untersuchungen zur Religion, Dichtung und Philosophie der Griechen*. Stuttgart: Hannsman.
- O’Connell, Peter. (2013), “Hyperides and Epopteia: A New Fragment of the Defense of Phryne,” *GRBS* 53: 90–116.
- Olson, S. Douglas (2010), *Athenaeus: The Learned Banqueters, vol. VI*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Palm, Jonas. (1955), *Über Sprache und Stil des Diodoros von Sizilien. Ein Beitrag zur Beleuchtung der Hellenistischen Prosa*. Lund: Gleerup.
- Pelling, Christopher B. R. (1979), “Plutarch’s Method of Work in the Roman Lives,” *JHS* 99: 74–96.
- (1980), “Plutarch’s Adaptation of his Source-Material,” *JHS* 100: 127–140.
- (1992), “Plutarch and Thucydides.” Stadter, Philip A. *Plutarch and the Historical Tradition*. London: Routledge, 10–40.
- Podlecki, Anthony J. (1998), *Perikles and his Circle*. London: Routledge.
- Raaflaub, Kurt A. (2000), “Den Olympier Herausfordern? Prozesse im Umkreis des Perikles.” Burckhardt, Leonhard and Jürgen von Ungern-Sternberg. *Große Prozesse im Antiken Athen*. München: Beck, 2000, 96–113.
- Raubitschek, Antony. (1941) “Phryne,” *RE* 39: 893–907.
- Russell, D. A. (1966), “On Reading Plutarch’s Lives,” *G&R* 13: 139–154.

- Sacks, Kenneth S. (1990), *Diodorus Siculus and the First Century*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University.
- (1994), “Diodorus and his Sources: Conformity and Creativity.” Hornblower, Simon. *Greek Historiography*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 213–232.
- Schwarze, Joachim. (1971), *Die Beurteilung des Perikles durch die Attische Komödie und ihre Historische und Historiographische Bedeutung*. München: Beck.
- Stone, Isidor F. (1988), *The Trial of Socrates*. Boston: Little, Brown.
- Taylor, C.C.W. (1991), *Plato: Protagoras*, rev. ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Vickers, Michael. (1997), *Pericles on Stage: Political Comedy in Aristophanes' Early Plays*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Wallace, Robert W. (1994), “Private Lives and Public Enemies: Freedom of Thought in Classical Athens.” Boegehold, Alan L. and Adele C. Scafuro. *Athenian Identity and Civic Ideology*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 127–155.
- (1996), “Book-burning in Ancient Athens.” Wallace, Robert W. and Edward M. Harris. *Transitions to Empire: Studies in Greco-Roman History 360-146 B.C. in Honor of E. Badian*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 226–240.
- Wirth, Gerhard. (1993), *Diodor und das Ende des Hellenismus: Mutmassungen zu Einem Fast Unbekannten*. Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften.



# *Dramas or Niobus:* Aristophanic Comedy or Spurious Play?\*

MIKEL LABIANO  
Universitat de València

There is an essential testimony from antiquity, that of Aristophanic *Vita*, which is used to establish the repertoire of comedies written by Aristophanes, about 38 plays more or less securely attributed to him. Essential or not, as we will see, scholars invariably cite this testimony:

*vit. Ar.* 59–61:

ἔγραψε δὲ δράματα μὲν, ὧν ἀντιλέγεται δ' ὥς οὐκ ὄντα αὐτοῦ· ἔστι δὲ ταῦτα  
Ποίησις, Ναυαγός, Νῆσοι, Νίοβος, ἃ τινες ἔφασαν εἶναι τοῦ Ἀρχίππου.

He wrote 44 comedies, of which four are considered spurious: *Poetry*, *Shipwrecked*, *Islands*, *Niobus*, which some say are by Archippus.<sup>1</sup>

Of these four questioned plays, modern scholars agree on the denial of the Aristophanic paternity to *Islands* and *Dramas or Niobus* (*Niobus* from now on), and they usually accept the Aristophanic authenticity of *Poetry* and (*Dionysus*) *Shipwrecked* with certain doubts and caution. Gil offers an accurate *status quaestionis* (1996, 129–133). In a previous study (Labiano 2012), we removed certain doubts in favor of the authenticity of the comedy *Islands*, thanks to the consideration and analysis of its phraseology, which was concluded to be genuinely Aristophanic, and now we give attention to the problem posed by *Niobus*. Therefore, in the following pages we intend to critically review the current position concerning *Niobus* and to closely examine the arguments provided hitherto, in order to check its

---

\* This paper is based on research funded by project FFI2012–36050 and FFI2013–41170 of the Government of Spain.

<sup>1</sup> Translation from Henderson 2007, 9, as all Aristophanic translations in this paper.

validity. Moreover, we will try to shed some light on the authorship of this fragmentary comedy.

Our starting point will be to review the main arguments existing about the authorship of *Niobus*, which the ancient source of the *Vita* attributed to Archippus, not to Aristophanes, as we have seen.

Meineke, in his monumental nineteenth-century edition of the Greek comedy fragments, merely echoes the testimony of the *Vita* in the volume dedicated to the *Historia Critica* of the fragments,<sup>2</sup> and Bergk, who specifically wrote the section devoted to the Aristophanic fragments in Meineke's great edition, attaches the text of *Niobus* to the Aristophanic *corpus* and repeats the testimony of the *Vita*, with brief information about the play and its unfortunately unclear plot.<sup>3</sup> Norwood simply repeats the testimony of the *Vita* and the attribution to Archippus of the four mentioned plays without any sign of criticism.<sup>4</sup> Geissler, with a little more criticism, conjectures a possible *terminus post quem* of 420 BCE, but he is equally clear and forceful about the authenticity of the play and firmly maintains that *Niobus* is not an Aristophanic play, as he has confidence in the information regarding the attribution to Archippus and the corresponding date.<sup>5</sup> Cantarella does not recognize the Aristophanic authenticity either and hypothesizes that the Alexandrian grammarians added the subtitle ἡ Κένταυρος to distinguish the comedy *Dramas* or *Centaur*, estimated as genuine in the Aristophanic repertoire, from the spurious *Niobus*.<sup>6</sup> Gil also concludes, in his modern monograph on Aristophanes, that the work is not genuinely Aristophanic and, more exactly, that it is not even datable.<sup>7</sup> The most curious detail in all these studies is that scholars do not offer an objective, firm or solid argument, in any of these cases, in order to safely or securely deny Aristophanic paternity of the play. The testimony from the *Vita* is

<sup>2</sup> Meineke 1839, 209.

<sup>3</sup> Bergk 1840, 167–168 = Meineke 1840, 1055–1056: “cuius argumentum prorsus obscurum, nisi quod ad Niobes liberorum sortem pertinuisse probabile est. Itaque fortasse finxit poeta Niobum aliquem, qui tanquam Niobe, necopinato casu liberis orbaretur omnibus. Ceterum haec fabula ab antiquis criticis Aristophani abiudicata est.”

<sup>4</sup> Norwood 1931, 202.

<sup>5</sup> Geissler 1969, 45: “Der Νίοβος ist nicht von Aristophanes verfaßt und muß einer späteren Periode angehören, da er auch dem Archippos beigelegt wird, der zuerst 415–412 auftrat.”

<sup>6</sup> Cantarella 1949, 157: “Una tantum exstitit fabula Δράματα inscripta: ἡ Κένταυρος addiderunt grammatici Alexandrini, ut eam a fabula spuria, cui titulus erat Δράμα[τα?] ἡ Νίοβος, distinguerent.” He also adds right there: “Neque absurdum est in hac fabula Aristophanem Ionis Chii Μεγάλῳ δράματι irrisisse, scripto ante a. 421, quo anno Ion vita iam defunctus erat.” This is a mere conjecture.

<sup>7</sup> Gil 1996 129 and 133. See specifically (129), “de las obras consideradas dudosas por algunos críticos tal vez sea de Aristófanes *Póiesis*, en tanto que *Diónysos nauagós*, *Nēsoi* y *Dráματα e Niobos* no lo son.”

simply accepted and credited as fact, but this very testimony is apparently valid for some plays in some cases but not for others, without any visible or objective argument: critics recognize *Islands* and *Niobus* as spurious plays and they accord with the *Vita* in doing so, for example, but many of them are inclined to recognize *Poetry* and *Shipwrecked* as genuine plays without any apparent reason or adduced argument.

In conclusion, for the moment editors of the text are silent on the authenticity of the play, and they merely collect the aforementioned testimony of the *Vita* (*vit. Ar.* 59–61) on the issue of the authorship of the fragments.<sup>8</sup> The general opinion among scholars of the last century, for their part, generally accepts the doubts raised in antiquity about the Aristophanic authorship of these texts and, therefore, these scholars propose to question the authenticity of these Aristophanic fragments, but at the same time they are not able to point to a potential author, as the alleged attribution to Archippus is not certain or reliable. Scholars point vaguely to the Middle Comedy period, or in any case the fourth century BCE. This is the among scholars, with general agreement the exception of one.

Against the general and negative consensus on this issue, Kaibel indeed questioned the credibility of the *Vita* and maintains that the attribution to Archippus established by the *Vita* is purely conjectural (Kaibel 1889, 46). Kaibel literally employs the term “vermuthungsweise,” “by way of conjecture,” and goes on to say that the assessment of the *Vita* does not mean that the four plays were judged by the same critics at the same time and in the same way, since in the Alexandrian tradition *Islands* and *Niobus* were fully integrated into the Aristophanic repertoire without a doubt whatsoever (Kaibel 1889, 47). In other words, it is not the same situation as with *Islands* and *Niobus* and that of *Poetry* and (*Dionysus*) *Shipwrecked*. Moreover, the confusion between Aristophanes and Archippus may have been due to the similarity of their work, to the point that Archippus was considered a second Aristophanes.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, it is possible that the ancient critics were over-zealous in their judgements and, in cases of doubt, they preferred to transfer to Archippus plays that, in their opinion, were not strictly in line with the

---

<sup>8</sup> We refer to Bergk 1840 and Kock 1880, and also in modern times to the masterful edition of Kassel-Austin 1984.

<sup>9</sup> Kaibel 1889, 55: “Die Nachahmung des Archipp war eine überaus getreue, vielfach wohl eine allzu getreue: die Erfindung selbst, die dem phantastischen Vogelleben das nicht minder geheimnisvolle Leben in der Meerestiefe zur Seite setzte, die einzelnen Motive, die Form und Art des Witzes, ja sogar den Ausdruck selbst hat der jüngere Dichter gelegentlich vom älteren entlehnt. Er kam sich etwa selbst wie ein zweiter Aristophanes vor. Dass dieses Verhältniss den alten Kritikern nicht entgehen konnte, ist um so natürlicher, als Archippos, der offenbar mehr ein nachschaffendes als ein selbstschöpferisches Talent war, sich nicht auf die eine Komödie des Aristophanes, die Vögel, beschränkt hat.”

supposed Aristophanic character or language (Kaibel 1889, 54–55). Bergk had previously expressed his opinion about *Islands* in even stronger terms and maintained that there was not anything unworthy of Aristophanes in that play.<sup>10</sup> Bergk is silent about *Niobus*, given the small size of the fragments, but, as we shall see, he could have expressed a similar opinion. In sum, there is no reason to think that *Islands* and *Niobus* are not Aristophanic plays, according to Kaibel.

Preserved fragments of *Niobus* are numbered 289–298 in the masterful edition of Kassel-Austin, including both text and *testimonia* and *scholia*, but only fragments 289–293 offer us a few verses, nine in all, which is all we have of this play. We refer the reader to the great monograph of Gil (1996, 164) for commentary about its brief content and plot. Now, we would like to focus on fragment Ar. fr. 290 K.-A., which is as follows:

Ar. fr. 290 K.-A.:

(A.) οἱμοι κακοδαίμων ὁ λύχνος ἡμῖν οἴχεται.

(B.) καὶ πῶς ὑπερβὰς τὸν λυχνούχον ἔλαθέ σε;

(A.) Blast it all! Our light's gone out on us.

(B.) And how did it leave the lightbox without your noticing?<sup>11</sup>

We think that two elements are especially relevant in this fragment at first glance. One of them has already been highlighted and has been the subject of commentary among ancient and modern scholars,<sup>12</sup> namely the term λυχνούχος, “lamp-stand,” “lightbox,” a compound word of λύχνος, “(portable) lamp,” and ἔχω, “to hold” (Beekes 2010, 880). But another point worth highlighting in this text has not yet been noted, as far as we know. We refer to the locution καὶ πῶς in the interrogative sentence.

λυχνούχος is a compound word mainly attested in comedy and as such it appears in Pherecrates (fr. 44 K.-A. = fr. 40.2 K.), Alexis (fr. 107 K.-A. = fr. 102.1 K.), and of course in Aristophanes, in fr. 8 K.-A. of his *Aeolusicon*, on the one hand, and in this fragment of *Niobus*, on the other.

The phrase καὶ πῶς, alone or extended, is used to address the interlocutor in a very direct and vivid way, in the context of dialogue between two speakers, real or simulated, in direct speech (indirect speech and indirect interrogative clauses

<sup>10</sup> Bergk 1840, 219 = Meineke 1840, 1107: “in ipsis autem fabulae reliquiis, quae sane exiguae sunt, nihil reperias quod Aristophane indignum sit.”

<sup>11</sup> Translation from Henderson 2007.

<sup>12</sup> Debate starts with Athenaeus (Ath. 15.699) and, in “modern” times, the argumentation and commentary offered by Bergk and Kock has not been superseded (Bergk 1840, 171–172 = Meineke 1840, 1059–1060; Kock 1880, 464).

are discarded in this study as not relevant to characteristic phraseology of an author). Moreover, in these situations and contexts we can detect nuances such as some kind of amazement, surprise, irony, or even moderate indignation to or direct contempt of the words that the previous speaker has just said. In other words, the phrase καὶ πῶς is basically a contemptuous question. This is a very common phrase in Aristophanic comedy,<sup>13</sup> as also in the tragedies of Sophocles<sup>14</sup> and Euripides.<sup>15</sup> However, Aeschylus never uses this locution.<sup>16</sup>

Outside the theater, the phrase καὶ πῶς in direct speech is especially abundant in Platonic dialogues.<sup>17</sup> There, in Platonic texts, it is an ideal locution when a speaker wants to address somebody, his opponent, as much in order to refute as to continue with an argumentation. Xenophon uses this form of expression more prominently, as he is expected to do, in the Socratic writings, in which dialogue is clearly predominant, unlike the rest of his literary production.<sup>18</sup> The phrase καὶ πῶς is not attested, for example, in his works of historiography nor in his technical writings. However, Xenophon could have used it perfectly in the series of

<sup>13</sup> Aristophanes (24 samples): *Eq.* 128, 178, 773, 792, 1044; *Nu.* 398, 717, 1333, 1380, 1434; *Pax* 1076a; *Av.* 571, 829, 1437; *Lys.* 912; *Th.* 78, 589; *Ra.* 582, 618; *Ec.* 110, 619; *Pl.* 575; *fr.* 158 (*Gerytades*); *fr.* 290 (*Niobus*).

<sup>14</sup> Sophocles (9 samples): *Tr.* 1210; *Ant.* 406; *Aj.* 50; *OT* 976, 1019; *El.* 1189; *Ph.* 1247; *OC* 606; *fr.* 314.299.

<sup>15</sup> Euripides (18 samples from genuine plays + 2 samples from spurious *Rhesus*): *Cyc.* 674; *Alc.* 142, 1052, 1056; *Heracl.* 254; *Hec.* 883; *El.* 225, 258; *Ion* 293, 958, 973; *Hel.* 1212; *Ph.* 900, 1348; *Or.* 1025, 1110; *Ba.* 840; *IA* 124; *Rh.* 282, 873.

<sup>16</sup> But see A. A. 278–281 Χο. ποίου χρόνου δὲ καὶ πεπόρθηται πόλις; / Κλ. τῆς νῦν τεκούσης φῶς τόδ' εὐφρόνης λέγω. / Χο. καὶ τίς τόδ' ἐξίκοιτ' ἂν ἀγγέλων τάχος; / Κλ. "Ἡφαιστος Ἴδης λαμπρὸν ἐκπέμπων σέλας, "CHORUS. But at what time was the city destroyed? / CLYTAEMESTRA. In the night, I say, that has but now given birth to this day here. / CHORUS. And what messenger could reach here with such speed? / CLYTAEMESTRA. Hephaestus, from Ida speeding forth his brilliant blaze" (translation from Smyth 1926). καὶ preceding a surprised or contemptuous question is common in tragedy, as we see later. Aeschylus does not use καὶ πῶς phrases, but uses other variants of καὶ in questions.

<sup>17</sup> Plato (72 samples!): *Phd.* 57a.6; *Tht.* 163d.6, 186d.1, 188c.1, 188e.6, 203b.2; *Sph.* 235a.5, 238a.9, 249a.5, 250b.6, 256d.3, 257b.8, 264a.3; *Plt.* 292e.3, 295a.5, 304e.7; *Prm.* 131a.7, 142a.2, 144c.3; *Phlb.* 18e.9, 21d.2, 25d.10, 27c.2, 35a.10, 41e.1, 42c.8, 43e.7, 55d.12, 59b.3, 60d.2, 63a.6, 63d.4; *Smp.* 198b.1, 202b.10; *Phdr.* 276a.4; *Alc.* i 133c.24, 134c.4; *Ly.* 210d.5, 217e.1; *Prt.* 309b.3; *Hp. Ma.* 300b.6; *Hp. Mi.* 371e.9; *Ion* 530a.8; *R.* 345b.4, 353c.3, 396b.3, 402e.5, 455e.5, 484c.5, 485c.11, 486c.9, 502b.3, 521c.2, 582a.7; *Lg.* 639a.8, 639b.8, 648c.6, 655a.3, 662a.8, 663a.8, 668e.6, 672e.4, 683e.7, 709e.1, 711c.3, 739e.6, 858d.10, 894e.6, 900e.12, 962a.8, 962b.3, 966b.3. The elliptical form καὶ πῶς; "And how?," is common in Plato, cf. Denniston 1950, 310.

<sup>18</sup> Xenophon (21 samples): *Mem.* 1.5.1, 3.9.12, 3.13.6, 4.4.19, 4.8.3; *Oec.* 1.18.1, 9.2.1, 11.25.4, 12.6.1, 13.4.3; *Smp.* 3.6.3, 5.4.1; *Cyr.* 1.3.10, 1.3.11, 1.6.22, 1.6.36, 4.5.11, 4.5.43, 4.5.44, 8.3.29; *Hier.* 7.11.1.

speeches that appear in his historical works, as Thucydides did twice. Herodotus also never used this phrase. See the Thucydidean texts:

Th. 5.92.1:

καὶ πῶς χρήσιμον ἂν ξυμβαίη ἡμῖν δουλεῦσαι, ὥσπερ καὶ ὑμῖν ἄρξαι;

And how could it prove as advantageous for us to become slaves, as it is for you to have dominion?<sup>19</sup>

Th. 6.38.5:

καὶ πῶς δίκαιον τοὺς αὐτοὺς μὴ τῶν αὐτῶν ἀξιοῦσθαι;

And how is it right that the same folk should not be deemed worthy of the same privileges?<sup>20</sup>

We also find the phrase in a medical writing of the *Corpus Hippocraticum*, namely *De Arte*, a late fifth century BCE work not especially technical, but highly rhetorical:

Hr. *de Arte* 4.8:

ἔπειτα δὲ καὶ πῶς οἷόν τέ ἐστι τοῖς ὑγιασθεῖσιν ἄλλο τι αἰτιήσασθαι ἢ τὴν τέχνην, εἴπερ χρώμενοι αὐτῇ καὶ ὑπουργέοντες ὑγιάσθησαν;

Again, how is it possible for patients to attribute their recoveries to anything else except the art, seeing that it was by using it and serving it that they recovered?<sup>21</sup>

But it is mainly in dramatic texts, both of tragedy and comedy, and also in satyr drama, where we can thoroughly see how this phrase works and expresses its full meaning in performance. Let us consider some samples from theatrical texts:

Ar. *Eq.* 176–179:

Δη. οὐκ, ἀλλὰ διὰ σοῦ ταῦτα πάντα πέρναται.  
γίγναι γάρ, ὥς ὁ χρησμὸς οὕτωςι λέγει,  
ἀνὴρ μέγιστος. Αλ. εἰπέ μοι, καὶ πῶς ἐγὼ  
ἀλλαντοπώλης ὢν ἀνὴρ γενήσομαι;

<sup>19</sup> Translation from Smith 1966.

<sup>20</sup> Translation from Smith 1966.

<sup>21</sup> Translation from Jones 1967.

FIRST SLAVE. No, the point is that all this is yours to buy and sell! You're going to be a tremendous big shot; this oracle here says so.

SAUSAGE SELLER. Tell me, just how does a sausage seller like me become a big shot?<sup>22</sup>

Ar. *Lys.* 910–912:

Κι. σὺ δ' οὐ κατακλινεῖ; Μυ. ποῦ γὰρ ἂν τις καί, τάλαν,  
δράσειε τοῦθ'; Κι. ὅπου; τὸ τοῦ Πανὸς καλόν.  
Μυ. καὶ πῶς ἔθ' ἀγνή δῆτ' ἂν ἔλθοιμ' εἰς πόλιν;

CINESIAS. Won't you lie down?

MYRRHINE. But my dear, just where could a person do it?

CINESIAS. Where? Pan's Grotto will do fine.

MYRRHINE. But how could I go back up to the Acropolis no longer pure?<sup>23</sup>

In this line, as Henderson accurately remarks, the tone of the question is indignant (1987, 180).<sup>24</sup> Something like this happens in the next scene, from *Thesmo-phoriazusae*:

Ar. *Th.* 75–80:

Ευ. ἔστιν κακόν μοι μέγα τι προπεφυραμένον.  
Κη. ποῖόν τι; Ευ. τῇδε θήμέρα κριθήσεται  
εἴτ' ἔστ' εἴτι ζῶν εἴτ' ἀπόλωλ' Εὐριπίδης.  
Κη. καὶ πῶς; ἐπεὶ νῦν γ' οὔτε τὰ δικαστήρια  
μέλλει δικάζειν οὔτε βουλῆς ἐσθ' ἔδρα,  
ἐπεὶ περ ἐστὶ Θεσμοφορίων ἡ μέση.

EURIPIDES. Some rather nasty trouble has been cooked up for me.

KINSMAN. Like what?

EURIPIDES. This very day it will be adjudged: does Euripides live on, or is he a goner?

KINSMAN. How can that be? The courts won't be trying cases today, and the Council isn't in session either, because it's the middle day of the Thesmo-phoria.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Translation from Henderson 1998a.

<sup>23</sup> Translation from Henderson 2000.

<sup>24</sup> As previously noted by Van Leeuwen 1903, 125: "De particulis καὶ πῶς indignationem testantibus."

<sup>25</sup> Translation from Henderson 2000.

Here the *καὶ πῶς* question marks this as an incredulous objection, in Austin-Olson's words (2004, 87). Surprise, incredulity, indignation, primarily contempt, but also merely curiosity, or no more than the intention to learn or continue dialogue: all these nuances are expressed in this phrase. In Plato's dialogues, for example, the latter uses clearly dominate, because Plato gives priority to the continuity and fluency of dialogue itself, but it is evident in the theater that the former nuances are the most important, because the theater attempts to create more realistic and 'dramatic' interaction between the characters. And the *καὶ πῶς* question seems to be the perfect phraseology for this. See more samples:

Ar. *Ec.* 617–620:

Πρ. αἱ φαυλότεραι καὶ σιμότεραι παρὰ τὰς σεμνὰς καθεδούνται·  
κᾷτ' ἦν ταύτης ἐπιθυμήσει, τὴν αἰσχρὰν πρῶθ' ὑποκρούσει.  
Βλ. καὶ πῶς ἡμᾶς τοὺς πρεσβύτεας, ἦν ταῖς αἰσχροῖσι συνῶμεν,  
οὐκ ἐπιλείψει τὸ πέος πρότερον πρὶν ἐκεῖσ' οἱ φῆς ἀφικέσθαι;

PRAXAGORA. The homely and bob-nosed women will sit right beside the classy ones, and if a man wants the latter he'll have to ball the ugly one first.  
BLEPYRUS. But what about us older men? If we go with the ugly ones first, our cocks won't have anything left when we get where you said.<sup>26</sup>

Ar. *Nu.* 395–398:

Στ. ἀλλ' ὁ κεραυνὸς πόθεν αὖ φέρεται λάμπων πυρί, τοῦτο δίδαξον,  
καὶ καταφρύγει βάλλον ἡμᾶς, τοὺς δὲ ζῶντας περιφλεύει;  
τοῦτον γὰρ δὴ φανερῶς ὁ Ζεὺς ἦσ' ἐπὶ τοὺς ἐπιόρκους.  
Σω. καὶ πῶς, ὦ μῶρε σὺ καὶ Κρονίων ὄζων καὶ βεκκεσέληνε;

STREPSIADES. But now explain this: where does the lightning bolt come from, blazing with fire, that incinerates us on contact and badly burns the survivors? It's quite obvious that Zeus hurls it against perjurers.

SOCRATES. How's that, you moron redolent of the Cronia, you mooncalf?<sup>27</sup>

The same effects are pursued by tragedy and satyr drama, as Sophocles and Euripides show:

S. *Ph.* 1244–1247:

Νε. σοφὸς πεφυκὼς οὐδὲν ἐξαυδᾷς σοφόν.

<sup>26</sup> Translation from Henderson 2002.

<sup>27</sup> Translation from Henderson 1998b.



Οδ. σὺ δ' οὔτε φωνεῖς οὔτε δρασεῖς σοφά.

Νε. ἀλλ' εἰ δίκαια, τῶν σοφῶν κρείσσω τάδε.

Οδ. καὶ πῶς δίκαιον, ἅ γ' ἔλαβες βουλαῖς ἐμαῖς,  
πάλιν μεθεῖναι ταῦτα;

NEOPTOLEMUS. Clever as you are, what you are saying is not clever!

ODDYSEUS. Neither your words nor your intentions are clever!

NEOPTOLEMUS. But if they are right, that is better than being clever!

ODDYSEUS. And how is it right to let go again what you got thorough my planning?<sup>28</sup>

E. *Cyc.* 672–675:

Κυ. Οὐτίς μ' ἀπώλεσ'. Χο. οὐκ ἄρ' οὐδεὶς <σ'> ἡδίκηει.

Κυ. Οὐτίς με τυφλοῖ βλέφαρον. Χο. οὐκ ἄρ' εἰ τυφλός.

Κυ. ἴδῳς δὴ σύ. Χο. καὶ πῶς σ' οὔτις ἂν θείη τυφλόν;

Κυ. σκώπτεις. ὁ δ' Οὔτις ποῦ 'στιν; Χο. οὐδαμοῦ, Κύκλωψ.

CYCLOPS. Nobody has destroyed me.

CHORUS-LEADER. So no one has wronged you.

CYCLOPS. Nobody has blinded my eye.

CHORUS-LEADER. So you are not blind.

CYCLOPS. <How sharp the pain!>

CHORUS-LEADER. And how could nobody make you blind?

CYCLOPS. You're laughing at me. But Nobody, where is he?

CHORUS-LEADER. Nowhere, Cyclops.<sup>29</sup>

E. *Ion* 956–959:

Πρ. οὐδὲ ξυνήιδει σοί τις ἔκθεσιν τέκνου;

Κρ. αἱ ξυμφοραὶ γε καὶ τὸ λανθάνειν μόνον.

Πρ. καὶ πῶς ἐν ἄντρῳ παῖδα σὸν λιπεῖν ἔτλης;

Κρ. πῶς; οἰκτρὰ πολλὰ στόματος ἐκβαλοῦς' ἔπη.

OLD MAN. But was anyone else complicit in your exposure of the child?

KREOUSA. Only the disaster itself and its concealment.

OLD MAN. How did you bring yourself to leave your child in the cave?

KREOUSA. How? With many a sobbing word passing my lips.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Translation from Lloyd-Jones 1998.

<sup>29</sup> Translation from O'Sullivan-Collard 2013.

<sup>30</sup> Translation from Lee 1997.

E. *Ion* 972–973:

Πρ. τὸν πρῶτον ἀδικήσαντά σ' ἀποτίνου θεόν.

Κρ. καὶ πῶς τὰ κρείσσω θνητὸς οὗς' ὑπερδράμω;

OLD MAN. The god who first treated you unjustly, take your revenge on him.

KREOUSA. And how, being a mortal, am I to overcome higher powers?<sup>31</sup>

In summary, as Denniston remarks (1950, 309–310), the particle καὶ preceding an interrogative, usually at the opening of a speech in dialogue, may either simply denote that the speaker requires further information, or, more commonly, convey an emotional effect or surprise, contempt, and so forth. There is often an echo of a word from the previous speech. In fact, the meaning of the particle καὶ at the opening of a question was clearly and more accurately defined by Kühner-Gerth (1904, 247): “Dieselbe Bedeutung hat καὶ, wenn es an der Spitze eines Fragsatzes steht, indem der Fragende mit Verwunderung die Rede eines anderen aufnimmt und aus derselben einen Schluss zieht, der die aufgestellte Behauptung in ihrer Nichtigkeit hinstellt.” The astonishment and contempt of the speaker is announced in advance, his intention to not believe or question someone or something. Smyth also explains this well (1956, 651): “In questions, καὶ before an interrogative expression marks an objection occasioned by surprise and indignation.” Therefore, it is clear that the particle καὶ is essential to the emotional meaning—of surprise, incredulity and contempt—of the question in these cases.<sup>32</sup> There may be a considerable amount of variations and some other possible combinations, like πῶς δέ, etc, with other particles than καὶ and other interrogative forms than πῶς, but at this very moment we are only concerned with καὶ πῶς phrases and their very distinctive and special meaning, which configures a particular mode of specific, defining and pertinent phraseology, linked to specific situations, contexts, nuances, intentions and, above all, characteristic style of a particular author(s). This is evidenced by its distribution in the texts and authors.

Outside the theater and literary genres that try to imitate dialogue, as in Plato and Xenophon, we find καὶ πῶς questions in the domain of rhetoric, in the composition of speeches addressed to an audience, and especially, as we might expect, in an author with accentuated dramatic tastes such as Demosthenes.<sup>33</sup> In the composition of a rhetorical speech before an audience, καὶ πῶς questions are most

<sup>31</sup> Translation from Lee 1997.

<sup>32</sup> As also noted by Van Leeuwen 1898 43: “καὶ: incredibilia proferri indicat haec particula interrogativo praemissa.”

<sup>33</sup> Lysias shows only one sample (Lys. 24.9), Isaeus only another one (3.24), Aeschines offers two samples (1.23 and 3.22), but Demosthenes exhibits six samples (4.20.2, 18.255, 18.282, 22.99, 35.47, 37.57). Concerning Demosthenes and his sense of theater, including

valuable for a figure of speech called *hypophora* (Latin *subiectio*). The *hypophora* is a fictional dialogue that the speaker introduces in a speech in the form of rhetorical questions with which he pretends to talk to himself or to an anonymous interlocutor, in order to refute or to question this imaginary conversational partner. Let us consider an example from the orator Demosthenes 18.255:

ἐγὼ μὲν οὕτωςι περὶ τῆς τύχης ἀξιῶ, ὀρθῶς καὶ δικαίως, ὡς ἐμαυτῷ δοκῶ, νομίζω δὲ καὶ ὑμῖν· ὁ δὲ τὴν ἰδίαν τύχην τὴν ἐμὴν τῆς κοινῆς τῆς πόλεως κυριωτέραν εἶναι φησι, τὴν μικρὰν καὶ φαύλην τῆς ἀγαθῆς καὶ μεγάλης. καὶ πῶς ἐνὶ τοῦτο γενέσθαι;

That is my view of fortune: a just and correct view, as it seems to me, and, I think, also to you. But he declares that a poor, insignificant thing like my individual fortune has been more powerful than the great and good fortune of Athens. Now how is that possible?<sup>34</sup>

Let us go back to the field of theater. With the exception of the examples attested in Sophocles, Euripides and Aristophanes (all of them marked in footnotes), the καὶ πῶς question is documented only in an author of Middle Comedy, Anaxilas, whose theatrical production is usually placed in the second half of the fourth century BCE. Here is the only attestation:

Anaxilas, *fr.* 34 K.-A.:

καὶ πῶς γυνή / ὥσπερ θάλαττα νῆσον ἀμφιέννυται;

How can that be? A woman clothed with an island like the sea?<sup>35</sup>

This is the only dramatic text—we must insist—apart from Sophocles, Euripides and Aristophanes, in which this locution is attested. Dunbar says about Ar. *Av.* 829 that καὶ preceding surprised and contemptuous questions is common in tragedy, comedy and philosophical dialogue (1995, 496), and that is correct, as observed mainly by Denniston (1950, 309–310) and previously by Kühner-Gerth

---

showmanship, see Hernández 2006. Concerning Demosthenes and his very masterful use of the hypophora, see López Eire 2000, 273–277. About the influence of Platonic dialogue in Demosthenes, see Hernández 1994.

<sup>34</sup> Translation from Vince-Vince 1953.

<sup>35</sup> Translation from Edmonds 1959. This sense seems to also be the inspiration for Sanchis *et alii* translation of the same text, “¿Y cómo una mujer, como el mar, se cubre con una isla?” (Sanchis 2007, 290). But we think it would be more accurate as something like: “And how does a woman, like the sea, put around herself an island?”

(1904, 247) and Smyth (1956, 651), among others, but we must specifically remark that, concerning comedy, καὶ πῶς is almost only Aristophanic (the unique exception being Anaxilas, *fr.* 34 K.-A., as far as we know).

We have concluded, with these remarks, the study of the distribution of καὶ πῶς questions in the fourth and fifth centuries BCE. The meaning of this phrase has already been settled (primarily surprise, incredulity, indignation, contempt, and, in addition, also mere curiosity or no more than the intention to learn or continue dialogue). Its character has also been demonstrated as genuinely Aristophanic and almost absent from the rest of comic authors. We have left out minor evidence outside the dramatic texts, but our examination of theatrical texts has been exhaustive. Finally, we would like to add a brief commentary about the distribution of καὶ πῶς questions and their conversational character, because it is still possible to draw some important conclusions from their distribution in the texts.

The fact that καὶ πῶς is used extensively by Plato, by the tragedians Sophocles and Euripides, and also by Aristophanes, as we have seen, makes us think that this linguistic feature is markedly conversational. And at the same time this fact leads us to think that this conversational level is high and formal, polite and elegant, educated and nothing vulgar. A similar consideration can be said for the interjection εἶέν. This term is typical of a relatively formalized conversational language, polite and elegant, as καὶ πῶς questions seem to be too. The interjection εἶέν is used precisely by Plato, Euripides, Demosthenes and sometimes also Aristophanes (Labiano 2000, 170). In relation to the reasons for and difficulties concerning the distribution of certain linguistic features, namely their presence or absence in a series of authors, Dover (1987, 233) says that “it is as if there was a market of Attic linguistic goods in which each writer could shop according to his taste, remaining free never, or very rarely, to take some of its products.” Therefore the question is to see which section of this “linguistic market of Attic goods” is preferred by Plato, Sophocles, Euripides, and Demosthenes, a section not avoided by Aristophanes. Plato the philosopher, Euripides the tragedian and Demosthenes the public orator share a linguistic character that has been traditionally identified and recognized already by scholars. Plato is the writer who, in his magnificent and vivid dialogues, reproduces the tone of the conversation of cultured men in Athens.<sup>36</sup> The Euripidean attraction towards everyday language was emphasized by

---

<sup>36</sup> See Meillet 1965, 241: “Platon reproduit le ton de la conversation des hommes cultivés d’Athènes.”

Aristoteles quite before Stevens.<sup>37</sup> That great orator and statesman that is Demosthenes also fills his speeches with conversational idioms.<sup>38</sup> Certainly all the conversational features are not identical. On the contrary, we can establish many purely linguistic differences, and sociolinguistic, pragmatic and contextual, among others, but this is not the question at this moment. These remarks may suffice.

Finally, we will draw our conclusions about the Aristophanic authenticity, or not, of *Niobus*. The first conclusion drawn from what we have observed is that, at first glance, Ar. fr. 290 K.-A. and the play it derives from are very serious candidates for Aristophanic genuineness, since the καὶ πῶς questions are very commonly used in his plays (24 samples). This claim gains strength with the fact that no other playwright of old comedy employs this locution, nor does Archippus, the author to whom the old *Vita* attributed the play. We have to wait for a late text in the history of Greek comedy, in the second half of the fourth century BCE, to find once more the καὶ πῶς question (Anaxilas, fr. 34 K.-A.). We possess very few lines of the fragmentary comedy *Niobus*; we know nothing but conjectures about its plot (presumably a mythological parody in connection with the myth of Niobe), about its date of composition and staging (nothing is known for sure in this respect), nor about its author, since the Aristophanic *Vita* openly says that some critics thought *Niobus* was not an Aristophanic play. However, the use and distribution of καὶ πῶς questions in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, and the fact that this phraseology is attested in the fragment Ar. fr. 290 K.-A., invite us to call into question the testimony of the *Vita* and to decide favourably on the genuine paternity of *Niobus* as an Aristophanic comedy. Considering the lack of better and more solid arguments in one direction or another, we conclude that the use of phraseology that is typically Aristophanic, and absent from the rest of Greek comedy with the exception of Anaxilas, is an argument good enough to assure the authenticity of the play. We cannot be absolutely sure of that fact, it is true; we do not have an overwhelming amount of evidence, but up to the present day, and with the evidence of typical Aristophanic phraseology, we think this is our best conclusion: the fragments of *Dramas or Niobus*, or at least Ar. fr. 290 K.-A., are the work of Aristophanes.

<sup>37</sup> See Arist. *Rh.* 1404b 24 κλέπτεται δ' εὔ, ἐάν τις ἐκ τῆς εἰωθυίας διαλέκτου ἐκλέγων συντιθῇ· ὅπερ Εὐριπίδης ποιεῖ καὶ ὑπέδειξε πρῶτος, "Art is cleverly concealed when the speaker chooses his words from ordinary language and puts them together like Euripides, who was the first to show the way" (translation from Freese 1926).

<sup>38</sup> See López Eire 1988, 770: "no hay en ella (sc. en su elocuencia) reglas de escuela, ni regularidades previsibles, sino que da la impresión de un incoercible torrente verbal, vigoroso y libre."

### References

- Austin, Colin and Douglas Olson. (2004), *Aristophanes. Thesmophoriazousae*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Beekes, Robert. (2010), *Etymological Dictionary of Greek*. Leiden and Boston: Brill.
- Bergk, Theodorus. (1840), *Aristophanis fragmenta*. Berlin, 1840 = Meineke, Augustus. *Fragmenta Comicoe Graecorum*. Vol. 2. Berlin: Reimeri 893–1224.
- Cantarella, Rafaele. (1949), *Aristofane. Le Comedie*. Vol. 1 *Prolegomeni*. Milano: Istituto editoriale italiano.
- Denniston, John Dewar. (1950<sup>2</sup>), *The Greek Particles*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dunbar, Nan. (1995), *Aristophanes. Birds*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Edmonds, John Maxwell. (1959), *The Fragments of Attic Comedy*. Vol. II *Middle Comedy*. Leiden: Brill.
- Freese, John Henry. (1926), *Aristotle*. Vol. 22. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Geissler, Paul. (1925), *Chronologie der altattischen Komödie*. Berlin: Weidmann.
- Gil, Luis. (1996), *Aristófanés*. Madrid: Gredos.
- Henderson, Jeffrey. (1987), *Aristophanes. Lysistrata*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Henderson, Jeffrey. (1998a), *Aristophanes. Acharnians. Knights*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Henderson, Jeffrey. (1998b), *Aristophanes. Clouds. Wasps. Peace*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Henderson, Jeffrey. (2000), *Aristophanes. Birds. Lysistrata. Women at the Thesmophoria*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Henderson, Jeffrey. (2002), *Aristophanes. Frogs. Assemblywomen. Wealth*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Henderson, Jeffrey. (2007), *Aristophanes. Fragments*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Hernández, Felipe. (1994), “Tucídides y Platón en Demóstenes,” *CFC (EGI)* 4: 139–160.
- Hernández, Felipe. (2006), “Demóstenes, Esquines y el teatro.” *Koinòs Lógos. Homenaje al profesor José García López*. Vol. 1. Ed. Esteban Calderón *et alii*. Murcia: Universidad de Murcia, 425–430.
- Jones, William Henry Samuel. (1967), *Hippocrates*. Vol. II. Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press.
- Kaibel, Georg. (1889), “Zur attischen Komödie,” *Hermes* 24: 35–66.
- Kassel, Rudolf and Colin Austin. (1984), *Poetae Comici Graeci (PCG)*. Vol. III.2 (*Aristophanes: testimonia et fragmenta*). Berlin: Walter de Gruyter. = K.-A.
- Kock, Theodorus. (1880–1888), *Comicoe Atticoe Fragmenta*. Leipzig: Teubner. = K.
- Kovacs, David. (1994), *Euripides. Cyclops. Alcestis. Medea*. Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press.
- Kühler, Raphael and Bernhard. Gerth. (1904), *Ausführliche Grammatik der griechischen Sprache*. Vol. 2.2. Hannover-Leipzig: Hahnsche Buchhandlung.
- Lee, Kevin Hargreaves. (1997), *Euripides. Ion*. Warminster: Aris & Phillips.
- Labiano, Mikel. (2000), *Estudio de las interjecciones en las comedias de Aristófanes*. Amsterdam: Hakkert.
- Labiano, Mikel. (2012), “Las islas: ¿comedia aristofánica o comedia media?” *Antigüedad y Cristianismo* XXIX: 321–336.
- Lloyd-Jones, Hugh. (1998), *Sophocles. Antigone, The Women of Trachis, Philoctetes, Oedipus at Colonus*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- López Eire, Antonio. (1988), “La oratoria.” *Historia de la literatura griega*. Ed. Juan Antonio López Férrez. Madrid: Cátedra, 737–779.
- López Eire, Antonio. (2000), “Sobre el estilo de Demóstenes.” *EIIIIEIKEIA. Studia graeca in memoriam de Lens Tuero*. Ed. Minerva Alganza Román *et alii*. Granada: Athos-Pérgamos, 263–285.
- Meillet, Antoine. (1965<sup>8</sup>), *Aperçu d’une histoire de la langue greque*. Paris: Klincksieck.
- Meineke, Augustus. (1839), *Fragmenta Comicorum Graecorum*. Vol. 1. Berlin: Reimeri.
- Nesselrath, Heinz-Günther. (1990), *Die attische Mittlere Komödie*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Norwood, Gilbert. (1931), *Greek Comedy*. London: Methuen.
- O’Sullivan, Patrick and Collard, Christopher. (2013), *Euripides. Cyclops and Major Fragments of Greek Satyrical Drama*. Warminster. Aris & Phillips.
- Smith, Charles Forster. (1966), *Thucydides*. Vol. III. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Smyth, Herbert. (1926), *Aeschylus*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Smyth, Herbert. (1956), *Greek Grammar*. Revised by Gordon M. Messing. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Van Leeuwen, Jan. (1898), *Aristophanis Nubes*. Leiden: Sijthoof.
- Van Leeuwen, Jan. (1903), *Aristophanis Lysistrata*. Leiden: Sijthoof.
- Vince, Charles Anthony and James Herbert Vince. (1953), *Demosthenes. De corona and De falsa legatione*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.





ὁ γὰρ βούλεται τοῦθ' ἕκαστος καὶ οἶεται:

## Dissembling in the Ancient Greek Novel

EDMUND P. CUEVA

University of Houston Downtown

There is no doubt that the myriad numbers of authors that wrote before Chariton, who is widely believed to have penned the first of the five complete and extant ancient Greek novels, included lies and falsehoods in their texts. Herodotus, after all, is known as the father of both lies and history—an odd combination for the modern reader, but no so strange for the ancient critic.<sup>1</sup> One, of course, can even go back as far as Homer and Hesiod to find instances of lying and falsehood. Odysseus tells indisputably false tales in the second half of the *Odyssey*—Homer even writes that Odysseus lied to his beloved Penelope (19.203). Indeed, this epic hero is recognized as the liar par excellence.<sup>2</sup> Hesiod in his *Theogony* (lines 27–

---

<sup>1</sup> Wiseman summarizes the ancient (and perhaps modern) view that the one and only task of the historian is to tell the truth, but in antiquity there already were critics who thought that it was “axiomatic that historians are liars” (122). Wiseman offers seven definitions for the types of lying included in the historians of the Hellenistic and Roman world: deliberately false historiography, fantasy, “events against nature,” “‘docu-drama’ or ‘faction,’” *aphēgēsis*, “lies defined as too much detail, and lies defined as not enough” (141). Moles supplies an analysis of this phenomenon in Herodotus and Thucydides and notes that the motives for the inclusion of untruths is sometimes “crudely political...literary rivalry (to trump one’s predecessors...)...the desire to spin a good yarn....sometimes historical parody; sheer emotional arousal or entertainment; the need to make moral points or bring out broader patterns or causes behind complicated sequences of events” (115). The inclusion of false information, such as an event, in historical narratives often gives rise to the question of whether or not the event took place. Or, if the “historian who proclaims the truth” is “actually telling the truth” (Moles 119).

<sup>2</sup> About Odysseus’ reputation for mendacity, Brann has written: “Who is there that has managed a lot of life sagaciously and has not told controlled lies? But Odysseus does not lie to himself, as does noble Achilles, nor does he lie for himself in a mean and narrow sense. He lies royally, as a king sometimes must who is returning a people in part run wild to its old and just constitution. But there is no denying that he also lies exuberantly, like a natural of the imagination” (236).

28) has the Muses state: ἴδμεν ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγειν ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα, / ἴδμεν δ', εὔτ' ἐθέλωμεν, ἀληθέα γηρύσασθαι (we know how to speak many false things as if they were true; but we know, when we wish, to utter true things.)<sup>3</sup> As for the vast philosophical corpus, Ogden (2007) has noted that traditional philosophical debate regarding truth and falsehood has “centered on three questions in particular: whether it acceptable for poets to lie; whether it was acceptable for states to lie for the national good; and whether it was acceptable to lie for personal advantage” (12). A philosophical treatment of falsehood appears in Lucian’s *Lover of Lies*, which borrows its form from Plato and has been interpreted as a “satire on contemporary philosophers” (Jones 1986, 51). The contrast between truth and fiction informed a good number of works by Lucian (Marsh 1998, 181–210), who, Marsh notes (182), created a paradox: when he titles a work *The True Story*, “he confesses that it contains nothing but lies,” while a large number of his titles speak of “shams and liars.” Jones has suggested that this keen focus on the interplay between the false and true may be Lucian’s critique or treatment of the ancient novel, which may have been a genre contemporary with Lucian’s own creative output. He may also just be making “fun of contemporary fiction” (Jones 1986, 46).

This essay does not intend to go into the relationship between the novel and other genres, does not define the novel as genre, nor addresses the relationship between the fictive, fiction, and lies.<sup>4</sup> Morgan (1993) has already done this: “the

---

<sup>3</sup> Bowie suggests that these lines can be interpreted as no more than “‘lies’, in the sense of stories told to mislead by tellers who know them to be false, or... ‘erroneous views’, i.e. stories mistakenly thought by their tellers to be true” (20–21). Or, a category of poetry that is ‘truly ‘fictional,’ in the sense that the poet is neither lying nor retelling erroneously held views, but is...telling a story that he has made up to be like reality without claiming that it is reality” (21). As Gill demonstrates, even philosophers have included lies or falsehoods in their works.

<sup>4</sup> Wood summarizes the relationship of lies/falsehood to fiction in the prologue to Gill and Wiseman’s *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World*: “There is, of course, plenty of argument everywhere about what is true or false, but there is also, wherever the terms are accepted as usable, considerable agreement about what they mean. Lies are whatever is not true, although we can classify them in a number of ways. We may wish to approve of certain forms of lie, and probably need to distinguish between intentional and unintentional untruths, between deception and ignorance and misinformation....Fiction is pure invention, any sort of fabrication. It is invention which knows it is invention; or which knows and says it is invention; or which, whatever it knows and says, is known to be invention. It is permissible or noble lying, licensed under quite specific cultural circumstances, and displays (sometimes) the linguistic or textual marks of its licence. It is not lying at all, but exempt from all notions of truth and falsehood, licensed in quite a different way. It is a form of double-think, a game of truth in which we pretend to forget that lies are lies; or in which the ordinary rules of truth and falsehood are both simulated and suspended. It is

necessary condition of fiction is that both sender and recipient are aware that it is factually untrue. There is no intent to deceive; but there is also a tacit agreement between the two parties to act as if what they know to be untrue is true. A mutual game of make-believe” (180). This essay takes as a given that the reader of the ancient novels understood that the narratives were not true accounts, and that these narratives were not meant to deceive. Instead, this essay is a review of the language that the ancient Greek novelists used in their novelistic lies, falsehoods, and deceptions.<sup>5</sup> Keep in mind that it has already been determined that lying displays “no special devices that indicate illocutionary force” (Meibauer 2007, 81) but is a social act, an assertion. Indeed, a lie is not a separate type of speech act with its own syntax; what is important in any analysis of the “lie” are the components of the statement.<sup>6</sup>

What is a lie or falsehood? Weinrich linguistically reworks St. Augustine’s famous definition of lying in his *de Mendacio* (4.4), *mendacium est enuntiatio cum voluntate falsum enuntiandi* (a lie is an utterance with the desire to tell a falsehood), to mean more than that a lie can only be a lie if the intention to deceive stood behind it. Weinrich suggests that linguists consider a lie a lie if “behind the (spoken) lying sentence there stands an (unspoken) true sentence, which differs by contradiction, that is, by virtue of the assertion morpheme *yes/no*” (39), or, in other words, the true linguistic lie. The author of fiction writes something with content, something that has meaning.<sup>7</sup> However, the linguistic lie should not be

---

artistry, evidence of a design to please. It is interpretation, the sign of a shaping mind, present in all writing, historical and literary. It is hypothesis, neither lie nor fable but a narrative of writing of things we cannot (yet) know” (xvi–xvii). On the relationship between fiction and lying, cf. also Smyth; on fiction and the anxiety of epistolary authenticity, see Rosenmeyer (especially, 133–168, 339–346); on the process by which fiction was separated from the genre of history, see Nelson, especially 11–22. Steinbrenner reviews the relationship between lies and the novel: Steinbrenner asks the question of whether “fiction can lie” and answers, “...in a narrow sense...no....In a wider sense...we can say that a lie is a part of fiction. It can, for instance, be part of a novel” (278).

<sup>5</sup> It should be noted that some of the novelists did try to give their narratives a semblance of truthfulness. Morgan (1993, 210) examines Heliodorus 9.8.2 as a prime example of such an attempt at veracity.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Sing.

<sup>7</sup> Cp. Currie: a “lie is an assertion made in the knowledge that what is said is untrue. It is sometimes said that where no assertion is made, as the author of fiction makes no assertion, there is nothing said that could be either true or false. But in one perfectly good sense, the author of fiction does say something: he utters a meaningful sentence, a sentence with a certain *content*” (5–6). Cf. also, Brann, who notes that truth “always has the gravity of *meaning*, of which facts may be devoid” (247).

grouped with such rhetorical figures as metaphor, euphemism, amphibole, emphasis, irony, anthropomorphism, etc.<sup>8</sup> Schauer and Zeckhauser supply a very useful definition for this essay: a genuine lie involves “(1) an intent to deceive, (2) the use of words that are literally false, and (3) the presence of a recipient who is caused by the lie to have a misimpression of reality” (41).

Let’s start with a quick, but thorough review of instances of dissembling in each of the five canonical novels. Chariton is full of fabrication, outright lying, treachery, and deceit—from the very start. Deceit kicks off the novel’s real action in 1.3, which is perpetrated by the rejected suitors. The scheme (**ἐπίνοια**) is first mentioned in 1.2.6,<sup>9</sup> which Callirhoe calls a **διαβολή** (accusation) in 1.3.6, which is echoed in 1.5.4 when Chaereas refuses to defend himself. In 1.4.4, we read how Chaereas is deceived through pretense (**προφασίζετο**) in this scheme—the verb **προφασίζομαι** is followed and reemphasized by a form of the verb **προσποιέω** in 1.4.8 (**προσποιήσαι**). We also encounter the ancient practice of getting truth (**τὴν ἀλήθειαν**) from slaves only through torture in 1.5.2. This occurs again in 3.4.11–12 when Theron is found out; Theron’s lying (**διεψεύσατο**) is further discussed in 3.6.2–3. This torture-truth construct appears again in 4.5.5 (**τὴν ἀλήθεια**), where Mithridates’ and Hyginus’ ruse is discovered via the “fear” of torture.

In 2.4.7–8 Dionysius uses standard, understandable terminology in comparing deception (**μῦθος, ἐξαπατάω**) with the truth (**τὰ γενόμενα, τὰ ἀληθῆ**). The truth (**τὴν ἀλήθειαν**), in fact, will be sought by Dionysius from Callirhoe in 2.4.10 (cf. 2.5.9). Dionysius, after all, is depicted as a decent and law-abiding man and Callirhoe is urged to tell him the truth: **εἰπὲ τὴν ἀλήθειαν.... Ἀλλὰ μόνον ἀπλῶς αὐτῷ διαλέγου, καὶ μηδὲν ἀποκρύψεως τῶν ἀληθῶν** (speak the truth... But speak frankly to him and don’t hide any of the truth, 2.5.3). To speak simply (**μόνον ἀπλῶς διαλέγω**) and not to conceal (**ἀποκρύπτω**) **τὰ ἀληθῆ** are new uses for and by Chariton in his novel. In her reply in 2.5.9, Callirhoe introduces yet another way of saying that she does not want to lie: **οὐ θέλω δοκεῖν ἀλαζῶν οὐδὲ λέγειν διηγήματα ἄπιστα** (I don’t want to seem to be boasting or to speak unbelievable

<sup>8</sup> On the conceptual definition of lying and its numerous interpretations, see Carson, especially chapters 1, 2, 9, and 11–14. Carson supplies a good definition with which one can easily work and apply in this analysis on the ancient Greek novel: “a lie is a deliberate false statement that the speaker warrants to be true.... lying requires that one *intends to warrant* the truth of what one says, but does not require that one actually warrants its truth” (17). For the numerous ways lying has been defined, cf. Ford 1996, 23–46; on the reasons for why people lie, cf. Ford 1996, 87–102; see also Bok 1999, 13–16. Although Shibles is an older and more basic text on lying, it still should be consulted. Bok’s *Lying* is a fundamental text on the nature of lying and its moral challenges. My essay does not touch on the morality of lying in the ancient novel.

<sup>9</sup> The Greek text of Chariton is from the Perseus Digital Library.

stories). In fact, Callirhoe does not lie, but asks Aphrodite for help in concealing the truth about her child (3.2.13).<sup>10</sup> Moreover, in 3.9.3 we are told more about Callirhoe's character, or, perhaps, about human nature in general: this passage deals with the identity of the strangers that had visited the temple, and though the old woman's account was vague, still Callirhoe suspected the truth, for people are apt to believe what they want to (**ὁ γὰρ βούλεται τοῦθ' ἕκαστος καὶ οἶεται**).<sup>11</sup> Goold (1995, 179) notes that Chariton echoes Demosthenes, *Olynthiacs* 3.19, and that this is also reechoed in 6.5.1.<sup>12</sup> The first instance of Callirhoe feigning not to understand (**προσεποιεῖτο** δὲ μὴ συνιέναι), but actually not saying anything false (**κατειρωνεύσατο**), occurs in 6.5.6–8, which also speaks volumes about the heroine's character.

The end of the novel includes two very important clues for Callirhoe's nature. In 8.4.4 we read Τοῦτο μόνον ἐποίησε **δίχα** Χαιρέου: εἰδὺα γὰρ αὐτοῦ τὴν ἔμφυτον ζηλοτυπίαν **ἐσπούδαξε λαθεῖν** (This was the only thing she did without telling Chaereas: she knew about his characteristic jealousy and was eager to keep this hidden.) Callirhoe writes a letter to Dionysius in order to thank him, ask that he take care of their soon, and bid him farewell. However, she did not want Chaereas to know about this letter. In 8.7.11 is found Ἐπεὶ δὲ ἤσθετο Καλλιρρόη κύουσας ἑαυτὴν ἐξ ἑμοῦ...**σοφίζομένη τοῦ τέκνου τὴν γονὴν**, ἵνα ἐκ Διονυσίου δόξῃ γεγεννηκέναι (When Callirhoe found out that she was pregnant with my child...she disguised the parentage of the child in order that it might appear to be the child of Dionysius). The deceit of Dionysius by Callirhoe is the last falsehood mentioned in the novel.

It is mostly men who fabricate stories or intentionally deceive in Chariton. Such as Dionysius in 2.7.1, where the text contrasts *προφασίζομαι* and *τὸ ἀληθές*; this also occurs in 3.2.8, where Dionysius debates about what to say and do: *Κἂν πιστευθῶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν*, ὑποδοχέυς εἰμι ληστοῦ. *Μελέτα, Διονύσιε, τὴν δίκην* (If I put trust in the truth, I've received stolen stuff from a pirate. Dionysius, practice your story). Phocas is also a consummate liar, and has own linguistic preferences for conveying falsehoods: **ἀνήγγειλεν** ὅτι τριήρης πολεμία λανθάνει **τάχα μὲν ἐπὶ κατασκοπὴν τάχα δὲ καὶ διὰ ληστείαν** ὑφορμοῦσα....**Ἔπεισε** τοὺς βαρβάρους (he reported that an enemy trireme was hiding at anchor perhaps on a

<sup>10</sup> This is one of the few instances where dissembling (modified as it is) took place for benign reasons.

<sup>11</sup> 3.9.3: Ἐφρασεν ἡ γραῦς οὐκ ἀκριβῶς μὲν, ὑπόπτευσεν δ' ὅμως ἐκείνη τὴν ἀλήθειαν: **ὁ γὰρ βούλεται τοῦθ' ἕκαστος καὶ οἶεται**. Demosthenes in his speech is referring to politics.

<sup>12</sup> 6.5.1: **φύσει γὰρ ἄνθρωπος, ὁ βούλεται, τοῦτο καὶ οἶεται**. Callirhoe believes the lies of Artaxates. Cf. above, 3.9.3. This desire to ascertain the identity of the strangers continues in sections 3.9.6–8.

spy mission or perhaps planning a raid; 3.7.2–3). He does not use any of the vocabulary that has been previously employed to tell his lie. In fact, ἀναγγέλλω is quite neutral in connotation and very appropriate to the military context. After offering the possibilities of τάχα μὲν...τάχα δὲ, he nevertheless persuades the Barbaroi. Chariton also employs the trope of torturing slaves in order to arrive at the truth when he reintroduces the parallel and balance between “lies” (ψεύδω) and “truth” (τὸ ἀληθές) in his characterization of the deceptive Phocas in 3.9.6–8. Other instances can be found in 5.4.3 when Mithridates pretends to be afraid when he is summoned to and prepares for trial and in 5.4.13 when the trial is underway; it is Dionysius who feels fear for having caused deceit and accuses Mithridates of having lied and engaged in forgery. Of special interest are 5.6.7 and 5.7.1. In the former, τὸν γὰρ πρότερον αὐτῆς ἄνδρα Χαίρεαν ὑπεκρίνατο ζῆν καὶ πλάσας ἐπιστολὰς ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι τῷ ἐκείνου (He pretended that her first husband, Chaereas, was alive and forged letters in his name), Chariton introduces the verb πλάσσω into his lexicon as a new way to convey deception. In the latter, Mithridates uses racial stereotypes in his answer to Dionysius’ courtroom rhetoric: μηδὲ ἄνθρωπος Ἑλλήν, πανούργως συνθεῖς κατ’ ἐμοῦ ψευδεῖς διαβολάς, πιθανώτερος γένηται παρὰ σοὶ τῆς ἀληθείας, (Don’t let a Greek, who has wickedly put together false slanders against me, be more reliable to you than the truth.)<sup>13</sup> Just as gnomic sayings about the truth, lying, and human nature had been uttered about the person of Callirhoe, we also get something similar about Chaereas in 7.1.4: ἐπίστευσεν εὐθύς· εὐξάπατητον γὰρ ἄνθρωπος δυστυχῶν, (he straightaway believed what he heard, for an unhappy man is easily deceived), which is yet another maxim about deception and belief. However, Chaereas does not shy away from telling a whopper or two.<sup>14</sup>

Women from the lower classes may share the same attributes as those of men. For example, in 2.7.6 we read: Συνεῖς οὖν ὁ Διονύσιος τὸ στρατήγημα τῆς Πλαγγόνης (Dionysius saw through the plan of Plangon). Plangon had devised a plan (τὸ στρατήγημα) to accomplish the desires of Dionysius and, at the same time, profit herself and Phocas. Of special interest is that Plangon is even described physically as being deceptive in her ways:<sup>15</sup> ἔπειτα συναγαγοῦσα τὰς

<sup>13</sup> The Great King’s eunuch, Artaxates, is also capable of lying or pretense (cf. 6.3.4). See also 6.6.6, where Artaxates, once again, lies; this time to the Great King himself.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. 7.2.1. Chaereas and Polycharmus do not hesitate even from lying to the Pharaoh. In the war sections 7.4.5 and 8.2.5 Chaereas tells lies, but no exactly defined words of deception are used. 7.4.5. In the passages that take place upon his return to Syracuse we find two examples in 8.6.4 and 8.6.6. In his return to Syracuse Chaereas deceives the Syracusans in numerous ways. In 8.6.4, no lie is technically told.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Vrij 2008, 37–89, Ekman 2009, and Frank 2009 (especially 62–70) on the nonverbal behavior of liars.

ὁφρῦς καὶ τρίψασα τὰς χεῖρας (then knitting her brows and rubbing her hands together; 2.10.3). Plangon continues her deception in 2.10.6 and 3.1.5 (οὐ γὰρ **ἐξαπατῶ** μου τὸν δεσπότην [I do not deceive my master]). 2.10.6 is different because Chariton uses the verb κατειρωνεύομαι as another word for dissembling. The trusting Callirhoe, however, does not suspect Plangon: οὐδὲν **ὑπώπτει** (2.10.7).<sup>16</sup>

Divinities can also shed light on the truth such as in 3.3.8: ἡ τύχη δὲ ἐφώτισε **τὴν ἀλήθειαν**... μάθοι δ' ἂν τις **ἐκ τῶν γενομένων** (Fate brought the truth to light... so that one may learn what happened). Confer also 3.4.10: Ταῦτα λέγοντος οἰκτρῶς ἔλεος εἰσῆλθε τὰ πλήθη, καὶ τάχ' ἂν **ἔπεισεν**, ὥστε κἂν ἐφοδίον τυχεῖν, εἰ μὴ δαίμων τις τιμωρὸς Καλλιρρόης ἐνεμέσησεν αὐτῷ **τῆς ἀδίκου πειθοῦς** (the crowd was moved to pity with Theron speaking so pathetically, and it was almost persuaded to arrange his passage home, had not some divine avenger of Callirhoe been displeased by his evil persuasion). The third instance appears in 4.4.5: Σὺ μόνος ἀγνοεῖς τὴν φύσιν τοῦ ἔρωτος, ὅτι οὗτος ὁ θεὸς **ἀπάταις** χαίρει καὶ δόλοις (You alone do not know the nature of Love, that this god rejoices in deceit and trickery). Fate might have revealed the truth earlier in the novel, but here we have another god, Eros, depicted as a divinity that delights in deceit.<sup>17</sup>

Longus does things a little differently. Although he, similar to Chariton, starts his novel with some deception no actual words of deception are used, but a ruse is nevertheless perpetrated in 1.3.2 and 1.6.2–3.<sup>18</sup> Indeed, it seems that the countrymen of Daphnis' and Chloe's foster parents are not wont to lie, but rather the Methymnaeans prefabricate: 2.19.2: **τῶν μὲν ἀληθῶν λέγοντες οὐδὲ ἔν**, μὴ καὶ πρὸς καταγέλαστοι γένοιτο... κατηγοροῦντες δὲ Μυτιληναίων (They did not speak one bit of truth, lest in addition they become laughing-stocks... they accused the Methymnaeans). Longus unfolds his story in a place where lies seem not to be told. Ploys, tricks, subterfuges, yes, but outright lies, no. For example in the third book of the novel Daphnis devises a clever plot by which he can get to spend time

<sup>16</sup> The Great King even accuses Callirhoe of being a goddess pretending to be a Greek from Syracuse in 6.3.5.

<sup>17</sup> Dreams can also be false: 3.7.7: Περιέσπασε δὲ τὸ πένθος ἐλπίς τοῦ τάχα ζῆν ἐκεῖνον καὶ **ψευδόνειρον** αὐτὴν γεγονέναι: τὸ δὲ πλεον ἢ γαστήρ: ἐβδόμῃ γὰρ μηνὶ μετὰ τοὺς γάμους υἱὸν ἔτεκε τῇ μὲν δοκεῖν ἐκ Διονυσίου, Χαίρεος δὲ **ταῖς ἀληθείαις** ("Callirhoe's grief was mitigated by the hope that perhaps Chaereas was alive and the dream had been false; and still more by her child. In the seventh month after the wedding she gave birth to a son, ostensibly of Dionysius, but reality of Chaereas"; the translation is from Goold 1995). Chariton here does two things: he creates a word for "dreaming falsely" and contrasts it with the ἀλήθεια of the birth of Chaereas' son.

<sup>18</sup> The key words and phrases from this passage are in 1.3.2 **κρύπτουσι, δοκοίη**; in 1.6.2–3: **λανθάνουσιν ὡς ἴδιον τρέφειν, πρὸς πίστιν**. The Greek text of Longus is from the Perseus Digital Library.

with Chloe during the cold winter months. No actual words of lying are used; Daphnis does prepare a set of lies, but in the end he does not tell any of them. Chloe also feigns pretense in 3.8.2, but in 3.10.3 accuses Daphnis of beguiling her (**ἀπατῶν με**). Daphnis visits Chloe often during winter employing the same deceptive strategy,<sup>19</sup> but it is love that causes the deceptions to take place. Even Daphnis' betrayal of his love for Chloe comes about because Lycaenium had overheard the couple had been unsuccessful at lovemaking and decided to help: 3.15.5: **ἐπιτεχνᾷται** τι τοιόνδε (she devised this scheme).

The five remaining instances of falsehoods in Longus all center on the precarious nature of the marriage of the young couple. In 3.26.3, Myrtale lies to Daphnis about why she and her husband do not agree to Daphnis' marriage request (**ἀλλας αὐτῷ τῆς ἀντιρρήσεως αἰτίας ἀπήγγειλε** [she supplied another reason for the rejection]). In 3.30.5, after Daphnis' second attempt, Lamo likewise does not give the real reason for the rejection of the offer (**τὸ μὲν ἀληθὲς οὐδ' ὥς ἐξηγόρευσεν** [he did not give voice to the truth]). In 4.19.3 toward the end of the story, Lamo does tell the truth about Daphnis' parentage (**ἀληθῇ λόγον**), which Dionysophanes wants in 4.20.1–2 (**τὸν δὲ Λάμωνα πάλιν ἀνέκρινε καὶ παρεκέλευετο τὰ ληθῇ λέγειν μηδὲ ὅμοια πλάττειν μύθοις ἐπὶ τῷ κατέχειν τὸν υἱόν. Ὡς δ' ἀτενὴς ἦν καὶ κατὰ πάντων ὥμνυε θεῶν καὶ ἐδίδου βασανίζειν αὐτόν, εἴ τι ψεύδεται** ["He began to question Lamo again, and warned him to tell the truth and fabricate no mythic tales in order to keep hold of his son. But Lamo stuck to his story, swore by all the gods, and offered himself for torture if he was lying"; the translation is from Henderson 2009.) 4.30.1<sup>20</sup> is the last passage in Longus on truth or falsehood when there is a discussion about whether or not to make public Daphnis' intended marriage.

Xenophon of Ephesus also starts with a reference to deception; in 1.5.7 (**καὶ προσεποιοῦντο** ὡς εἶη τὸ δεινὸν ἐκ τῶν ὑποχθονίων θεῶν<sup>21</sup>), the seers and priests brought in to consult about Anthia's sickness pretend that the cause of her malady comes from the underworld. However, unlike Chariton's novel, the concept of deception or dissembling does not appear as often. It is not until sections 2.5.6–2.6.1 that any sort of lying takes place when Manto plots against the novel's male

<sup>19</sup> The key words and phrases from this passage are in 3.4.5: **σόφισμα**; in 3.6.2: **πρόφασιν σκηψάμενος, πιθανώτατον**; in 3.6.3–4: **‘ἀλλ’ οὐδὲν’** ἔφη **‘τούτων ἀπάντων ἀνύποπτον’**; in 3.8.2: **ἐσκήπτετο**; in 3.11.3: **ἄλλαις τέχναις**.

<sup>20</sup> The key words and phrases from this passage are **κρύπτειν** and **κρύφα**.

<sup>21</sup> The Greek text of Xenophon of Ephesus is from the Perseus Digital Library.



protagonist and, as a result, her father believes her lie about the alleged rape attempt.<sup>22</sup> Other instances occur in 3.2.8, when Hippothous recalls how Hyperanthes' father handed him over to Aristomachus on the pretext of instruction (ὁ δὲ αὐτῷ δίδωσι τὸν Ὑπεράνθην **προφάσει** διδασκαλίας: ἔλεγε γὰρ εἶναι λόγων τεχνίτης);<sup>23</sup> in 3.8.1, where Anthia laments that Eudoxus had deceived her by giving her a sleeping draught rather than a lethal poison; in 3.11.4, when Anthia uses a religious excuse for preventing sex with king Psammis; and in 3.12.6 when Cyno lies that Habrocomes had killed her husband—Cyno, however, pays the penalty. We also read of two examples in which names are not disclosed. The first is in 4.3.3: Anthia does not reveal her name (**τὸ μὲν ἀληθὲς οὐκ ἔλεγεν**) to Hippothous since she did not recognize him. The second is in 5.4.4 (**ἡ δὲ τῶν μὲν ἀληθῶν οὐδὲν λέγει**): Anthia claimed to be an Egyptian captured by the bandits. Anthia does not like revealing her true name. The last three cases of the novel are in 5.4.10 (**ἀληθῆ**), 5.5.7 (**κακεῖνος ἐκ τῶν ἤδη πεπραγμένων ἐπίστευσεν αὐτῇ**), and 5.7.4–8.<sup>24</sup> In the first, Anthia is perhaps tired of all the lies and asks for some truth from the gods. In the second, Rhenaea lies about what actually happened to Anthia. In the last, Anthia pretends to be ill and spins an elaborate yarn about the cause of her supposed sickness.

Similar to the three earlier novelists, Achilles Tatius includes a reference to pretense at the beginning of his novel in 1.10.4 and 1.10.6<sup>25</sup> in which the author writes that women prefer to pretend to be forced into love—the words used to denote pretense are all dependent upon the verb δοκέω. This insistence on pretense, which is regularly combined with love, is reinforced often in the text. For example: Clitophon pretends (**προσεποιούμην**) to be stung by a bee in order to get Leucippe to kiss him (2.7.3); Leucippe pretends (**σκηψαμένη**) to be ill so as to be able to meet her beloved (2.16.1); Satyrus fails in his attempt to befriend Conops, who saw through the former's effort (**προσεποιεῖτο**; 2.20.2); Charmides thinks that Leucippe's illness is a pretense (4.9.3);<sup>26</sup> so as to bring his plot to completion Chaereas uses the excuse (**πρόφασιν**) that he has to use the toilet (5.7.1); Clitophon pretends to be ill so as not to consummate his marriage to Melite

<sup>22</sup> The key words and phrases from this passage are **τέχνην** συνετάττετο and **δόξας ἀληθῆ λέγειν αὐτήν**.

<sup>23</sup> Xenophon here signals that the father was bad and that his actions were also bad in 3.2.7.

<sup>24</sup> The key words and phrases from this passage are **ἐμμεῖτο**, **νομίσας ἀληθῶς νοσεῖν τὴν κόρην**, and **ἀπέκρυπτον**.

<sup>25</sup> The Greek text of Achilles Tatius is from the Perseus Digital Library.

<sup>26</sup> The key words and phrases from this passage are **σκήψιν ὑπόπτειε**, **τέχνην ἐπ' αὐτόν**, **ὑπεβλέπετο**, and **τὴν ἀλήθειαν**.

(5.21.2);<sup>27</sup> Leucippe pretends to know magic (**ἀρνούμενη γὰρ οὐκ ᾔετο πίστιν ἔξειν**; 5.22.7).

There are also bold, outright lies in this novel: Leucippe lies twice about the identity and nature of the person who had been in her bed (**οὐδὲ οἶδα τοῦτον ὅστις ἦν**, 2.25.1; **τίνα δ' ἄλλην προσαγάγω πίστιν τῆς ἀληθείας μείζονα**, 2.82.2); Menelaus and Clitophon agree to lie (**ἀπατήσαι**) to Charmides in order that Charmides not get his way with Leucippe (4.6.3); Sosthenes lies outright about Leucippe and Clitophon (**διαβαλὼν...λέγει τι πάνυ πιθανῶς πλασάμενος**, 6.3.3); Sosthenes lies to Thersander about his lack of success in attempting to get Leucippe to acquiesce (6.15.1–3);<sup>28</sup> Clitophon tells a lie by stating that he will tell the complete truth in court—he spins a very elaborate lie (7.7.2);<sup>29</sup> and Clinias tells the court that Clitophon has lied (7.9.2: **κατέψευσται**).

Similar to Chariton's novel, the gods are also involved in the lies and ruses of mortals. Satyrus cautions that one should not lie to Eros (2.6.6: **Ὅρα μὴ καταψεύῃ τοῦ θεοῦ**) and the book ends with a religious penalty for lying (8.12.9: **κἂν μὲν ἀψεύδῃ τὸν ὄρκον**, μένει κατὰ χώραν ἡ πηγὴ: ἂν δὲ ψεύδῃται, τὸ ὕδωρ ὀργᾷ καὶ ἀναβαίνει μέχρι τῆς δέρης καὶ τὸ γραμματεῖον ἐκάλυψε; “If she had sworn a true oath, the spring remains in its place; but if she has perjured herself, the water boils up, rises to the height of her neck, and covers the written tablet”). And like in Chariton, dreams can also be deceptive or clarify the truth: Panthea believes that reality is worse than her dreams (2.24.4: **Ἐπλάνα** δέ με καὶ τὰ τῶν ἐνυπνίων φαντάσματα, **τὸν δὲ ἀληθέστερον ὄνειρον** οὐκ ἔθεσάμην; “Even the visions of the night have beguiled me—this is truer than any dream”); Artemis had appeared to Sostratus in a dream and had revealed to him that he would find his daughter (7.14.6: ἡ Ἄρτεμις **οὐ ψεύδεται**).

The instances of lying or telling the truth as a way in which to depict character appear in three places in the novel. In 2.23.1, where Conops is depicted as a slave to his belly—he cannot pass up a drink even though he at first suspected a trick (**Ὁ δὲ ὑπώπτευε μὲν τινα μηχανήν**).<sup>30</sup> In 6.16.4–6, where Leucippe is overheard deliberating about whether or not to reveal the truth, she states: **Ἄρα ἀποκαλύψασα τοῦ δράματος τὴν ὑπόκρισιν** διηγῆσομαι **τὴν ἀλήθειαν**;...**Ἀλλ' οὐδὲ πιστεύσεις** ἐμοὶ λεγούσῃ. **Φοβοῦμαι δὲ καὶ ἐὰν πιστεύσης** περὶ Κλειτοφῶντος, μὴ τὸ ἄκαιρόν μου τῆς ἐλευθερίας τὸν φίλτατον ἀπολέσῃ. **Φέρε**

<sup>27</sup> The key words and phrases from this passage are **σκήπτομαι**, **προφασίζομαι**, and **τὴν πρόφασιν**.

<sup>28</sup> **Ὁ δὲ τὸν μὲν ὄντα λόγον οὐ λέγει, σοφίζεται δὲ τι μάλα πιθανῶς** (“...he did not reply the truth, but contrived an ingenious and plausible story...”; the quoted translations for Achilles Tatius are from Gaselee 1984).

<sup>29</sup> ἐγὼ δὲ πᾶσαν ὑμῖν ἐρῶ **τὴν ἀλήθειαν**... (τί γὰρ οὐ δεῖ **τάληθ' ἡ λέγειν**);

<sup>30</sup> Cf. 2.31.3: **προσεπεποίητο** γὰρ καὶ αὐτῆς...ἐρᾶν.

**πάλιν ἐνδύσωμαί μου τὸ δρᾶμα: φέρε πάλιν περίθωμαι τὴν Λάκαιναν** (“Shall I strip off the whole make-up and pretence of the long story and declare the truth? ... But you will hardly believe my words—and if you did, I should be afraid for Clitophon’s sake; my untimely frankness might be the ruin for him who is dearest to me. Come let me play my part once more; let me once again assume the character of Lacaena.”). And in 8.7.5, where Leucippe, in an attempt to relieve her father’s anxiety, assures him that she and Clitophon had told the truth (**οὐδέτερος ἡμῶν οὐδὲν ἐψεύσατο**).

Sections 3.15.1–3.22.6 supply the narrative on the trick of the *Scheintod* of Leucippe. The passage is too long to include here, but Satyrus relates the initial steps of the deception (cf. 5.7ff. on the beheading of Leucippe). The complexity of the ruses and deceptions range from the simple to quite intricate in this novel. For example, in 6.4.1 Sosthenes explicitly directs two of his servants to use the arts of deception against the two maids staying with Leucippe (περιελθεῖν **δόλω**), but in 6.8.4–6.10.6 Melite crafts a complex plot, especially in 6.10.1–6. Complexity is also found in the contrived story in 7.3.3–5 about the four fellows in the inn, where deception, plotting, torture, and truth appear.

Heliodorus’ novel does not begin with a lie or a ruse. Instead, in the opening scene the author informs the read that the bandits do not know who Charicleia is, that they do not the truth (1.2.6). However, following a similar pattern as the other novels, Heliodorus structures his plot frequently using or referring to plots, deceptions, and tricks: Knemon tells us that his stepmother, Demainete, lusted after him, while pretending (**ἐπλάττετο**) to look on him as a son and that she feigned illness (**ἐσκήπτετο**) when Knemon’s father arrived home. In 2.17.4, Knemon suggests a plan of action that involves deception (**πρόφασιν**) that is related in 2.19 as being comprised of Knemon’s stomach complaints.<sup>31</sup> In two very similar constructed passages Kalasiris pretends not to know the true nature of couple’s affliction;<sup>32</sup> Kalasiris also uses non-verbal lying in 4.7.2 (Πρὸς ταῦτα ἐθρυπτόμην ἀνέσπων τε τὴν ὀφρὺν καὶ βλακῶδες βάινων..., “Whereupon I started strutting about self-importantly, hoisted an eyebrow”<sup>33</sup>). There is also Nausikles’ ruse in 5.8.4 and 5.10.2,<sup>34</sup> which involved Charicleia’s complicity, and, in turn, Kalasiris’ duping of Nausikles in 5.12.1, 5.13.2, and 5.16.5.<sup>35</sup> In 5.20.7, in an attempt to

<sup>31</sup> Cf. 8.1 for the King of Ethiopia’s ruse.

<sup>32</sup> The key words and phrases are: in 3.17.2: **μιμούμενος**; in 3.18.3: **σοφιστεύων**; in 4.5.3: **ἡρχόμεν ὥσπερ ἐπὶ σκηνῆς τῆς ὑποκρίσεως**.

<sup>33</sup> The translation is from Morgan in Reardon, 1989.

<sup>34</sup> The key words and phrases are: in 5.8.4: **καὶ τοῦ σοφίσματος ἔτυχεν**; in 5.10.2: **ἀπάτη** and **φανείσαν**.

<sup>35</sup> The key words and phrases are: in 5.12.1: **τῶν ὄντων... ὑπόνοιαν**; in 5.13.2: **καὶ ὥς**; in 5.16.5: **ἅπαντα ἔλεγε... καὶ τινα καὶ ἐκὼν ὑπερβαίνων ὅσα τὸν Ναυσικλέα γινώσκειν**

inveigle him into revealing the whole of his plans (Υπαγόμενος οὖν αὐτὸν ὥστε πᾶν ἀναντῶσαι τὸ βούλημα), Tyrrhenos lies to Trachinos about Kalasiris and the others.

There are also out-and-out lies. For example: Aristippos believes the lies of Deimanete (ἀλλὰ πιστεύων μὴδ' ἂν ψεύσασθαι) (1.11.1); some people do not believe (ὑποψία) the lies told about Knemon (1.13.5); Theagenes accuses Knemon of lying (ἁπατῶν...ἁπατῶ...ἁπατῶμαι) in 2.5.4; Persinna recalls the lie (πλάσαμένη) she told her husband about the death of Charicleia at birth; Kalasiris demands that Charicleia speak the truth and he also reveals the truth about her in 4.10.1, 4.12.1, 4.12.3, 4.13.1, and 4.13.3;<sup>36</sup> in 7.3.5, Thyamis categorically states that Petosiris had lied.<sup>37</sup> Most interestingly, Charicleia lies and states in 1.25 and 1.26 that Theagenes is her brother,<sup>38</sup> but, here, Heliodorus inserts a gnomic statement: Καλὸν γάρ ποτε καὶ τὸ ψεῦδος, ὅταν ὠφελοῦν τοὺς λέγοντας μὴδὲν καταβλάβῃ τοὺς ἀκούοντας (“Sometimes even a lie can be good, if it helps those who speak it without harming those to whom it is spoken,” 1.26.6). Lastly, in 10.18.2 Charicleia even admits to lying (“Τὸν μὲν ἀδελφὸν ἐψευσάμην,” ἔφη, “τῆς χρείας τὸ πλάσμα συνθείσης,” “I lied when I said he was my brother,” she said, “but falsehood was the product of necessity”), which supports the statement in 1.26.6. The outright deception of some characters also appears in the text. For example, some were duped by Deimanete about the charges she made against Knemon, while others were not (cf. 1.14.1).

In 2.18.1 (ῥαδίως ὑπόκουφον ἄνδρα πείσαντες, “he was rather a gullible individual, and they had not difficulty in convincing him”) we get the first instance where lying or not lying is used to depict character, in this case the person of Thermouthis. One also finds these examples: Kalasiris noting that Charicleia is clever at deception (σοφιστεῦσαι) in 6.9.7; Theagenes’ characterization of Achaimenes in 7.26.10 with the words πλάσασθαι and τῶν ἀληθῶν; Kybele as the very accomplished liar in 8.7.5 (πεισθεῖην;...διαψεύδεσθαι τὸ πιστόν);<sup>39</sup> a description of Charicleia’s nature in 8.7.6 (τὸ μὲν ἁπατηλὸν συνήθως ὑφορωμένη τοῖς δὲ ὄρλοις ἐν μέρει πειθομένη καὶ τὸ ἡδὺ τῶν ἐπαγγελθέντων ἐκοῦσα καταδεχομένη· ἃ γὰρ ἐπιθυμεῖ ἢ ψυχὴ καὶ πιστεύειν φιλεῖ [“Although

---

οὐ συμφέρειν ἐδοκίμαζε (“He told the whole story...deliberately omitting some details that he deemed Nausikles should not know”).

<sup>36</sup> The key words and phrases are: in 4.10.1: μὴ κρύπτειν; in 4.12.1: ἅπαντα ὡς ἔσχεν ἀνακαλύπτων; in 4.12.3: ἅπαντα; in 4.13.1: τὰ ὄντα and εἰς πίστιν; in 4.13.3: Πλάττεσθαι.

<sup>37</sup> The key words and phrases are: ἐπιβουλῆς, διαβολῶν...ψεῦδος, and ὑποψίαν.

<sup>38</sup> The key words and phrases are: in 1.25.6: ἀναπλάττειν; in 1.26.5: Φυλακτέον οὖν...καθάπερ πάλαισμα τὸ πλάσμα.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. also 8.7.2: ...ἀναπλαττούση; ἄλλοτε ἄλλας προφάσεις ἀναπλαττούσης.

she had grown used to suspecting treachery, the oaths had gone some way to winning her trust, and she was only too happy to believe such pleasant promises, for the heart is prone to believe in that for which it craves.”)]—**ἃ γὰρ ἐπιθυμεῖ ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ πιστεύειν φιλεῖ** is another gnomic saying, parallels of which are found in some of the other novels; Hydaspes suggests that Charicleia is a liar, but she denies that she lies (10.10.4 and 10.11.3). As in the other novels, religion and deception or religious prohibitions against lying also appear. In 1.30.5, Thyamis cursed the goddess again and again for her deceit (**δολερᾶν**). Theagenes later states that some god had been kind enough to reveal that he had been deceived (2.7.3: Ἐπεὶ δὲ **ἀπάτην** ἐκεῖνα θεῶν τις εὖ γε ποιῶν ἔδειξεν). Two instances of deception are hard to categorize. The first is 3.4.9 (Ἀλλ' ὃ τῆς ἡδείας **ἀπάτης**) where Kalasiris labels the fact that he cannot see Charicleia and Theagenes a deception. The second is in 5.22.6 (καὶ ὁ μὲν ἐλάνθανεν τὰ ὄντα ὡς **πλάσμα** λέγων), where the Tyrian merchant tells his crew that he had a forewarning and what he thought was a fiction he did know was true.

How does one interpret or make sense of all of this lying, deception, and duplicity? Perhaps the chart below can help. The five authors use a wide variety of words and phrases when writing about the truth, lies, or deceptions, but only five groups of words, those formed on the ἀλήθ-, πειθ-, προφ-, σκίηπ-, and ψευδ- roots, appear in all five of the ancient Greek novels. Longus and Xenophon include the least amount of these words. It may be suggested that the idyllic and edenic nature of the former does not allow for lying. The scarcity of these words in the latter may support those who call this novel an epitomized text. While Chariton and Heliodorus supply the reader with some gnomic sayings about lies and what they tell us about human nature, Achilles Tatius includes the greatest number of instances of the wide variety of words and phrases. However one interprets the passages and data supplied in this brief essay, it cannot be disputed that all of the novelists included dissembling in their novels. After all, these texts are about humans, their loves, foibles, and adventures. Chariton's φύσει γὰρ ἄνθρωπος, ὁ γὰρ βούλεται τοῦθ' ἕκαστος καὶ οἶεται or Heliodorus' **ἃ γὰρ ἐπιθυμεῖ ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ πιστεύειν φιλεῖ** cannot but make sense to the reader of an ancient romance.

|            | C | L | X | AT | H |
|------------|---|---|---|----|---|
| ἀλήθεια    | × |   | × | ×  |   |
| ἀληθής     |   | × | × | ×  | × |
| ἀληθῶς     | × |   | × |    |   |
| ἀνακαλύπτω |   |   |   |    | × |
| ἀναπλάττω  |   |   |   |    | × |

|                   | C | L      | X | AT | H |
|-------------------|---|--------|---|----|---|
| άνυποπτος         |   | ×      |   |    |   |
| άπατάω            |   |        |   | ×  | × |
| άπάτη             | × |        |   |    | × |
| άπατηλός          |   |        |   |    | × |
| ἄπιστος           | × |        |   |    |   |
| ἀποκαλύπτω        |   |        |   | ×  |   |
| ἀποκρύπτω         | × |        | × |    |   |
| ἀψευδέω           |   |        |   | ×  |   |
| διαβάλλω          |   |        |   | ×  |   |
| διαβολή           | × |        |   | ×  | × |
| διηγήματα ἄπιστα  | × |        |   |    |   |
| διαψεύδω          | × |        |   |    | × |
| δοκέω             | × | ×      | × | ×  |   |
| δολερός           |   |        |   |    | × |
| δόλος             |   |        |   | ×  |   |
| ἐξαπατάω          | × |        |   |    |   |
| ἐπιβουλή          |   |        |   |    | × |
| ἐπινοέω           |   |        |   | ×  |   |
| ἐπίνοια           | × |        |   |    |   |
| ἐπιτεχνάομαι      |   | ×      |   |    |   |
| εὐεξαπάτητος      | × |        |   |    |   |
| καταψεύδομαι      |   |        |   | ×  |   |
| κατειρωνεύομαι    | × |        |   |    |   |
| κρύπτω            |   | ×      |   |    | × |
| κρύφα             |   | ×      |   |    |   |
| λαθεῖν τὴν τέχνην | × | λαθεῖν |   |    |   |
| μηχανή            |   |        |   | ×  |   |
| μιμέομαι          |   |        | × |    | × |
| μόνον ἀπλῶς       | × |        |   |    |   |
| διαλέγω           |   |        |   |    |   |
| μῦθος             | × | ×      |   |    |   |
| πεῖθω             | × |        |   |    | × |
| πιθανός           | × | ×      |   | ×  |   |
| πιστεύω           |   |        | × | ×  | × |
| πίστις            |   |        |   | ×  | × |
| πιστός            |   |        | × |    | × |
| πλανάω            |   |        |   | ×  |   |

|                               | C | L      | X | AT | H      |
|-------------------------------|---|--------|---|----|--------|
| πλάσμα                        |   |        |   |    | ×      |
| πλάσσω                        | × | πλάττω |   | ×  | πλάττω |
| πρὸς πίστιν                   |   | ×      |   |    |        |
| προσποιέω                     | × |        | × | ×  | ×      |
| προφασίζομαι                  | × |        |   | ×  |        |
| πρόφασις                      | × | ×      | × | ×  | ×      |
| σκήπτω                        | × | ×      | × | ×  | ×      |
| σκήψις                        |   |        |   | ×  |        |
| σοφίζω                        | × |        |   | ×  |        |
| σόφισμα                       |   | ×      |   |    | ×      |
| σοφιστεύω                     |   |        |   |    | ×      |
| στρατήγημα                    | × |        |   |    |        |
| συνήμι                        |   |        |   | ×  |        |
| τὰ ἀληθῆ                      | × |        |   | ×  |        |
| τὰ γενόμενα                   | × |        |   |    |        |
| τὰ ὄντα                       |   |        |   |    | ×      |
| τάχα μὲν...τάχα<br>δὲ         | × |        |   |    |        |
| τέχνη                         |   | ×      | × | ×  |        |
| τὸν μὲν ὄντα<br>λόγον οὐ λέγω |   |        |   | ×  |        |
| τῷ ὄντι                       |   |        |   | ×  |        |
| τῶν γεγονότων                 | × |        |   |    |        |
| ὑποβλέπω                      |   |        |   | ×  |        |
| ὑπόκουφος                     |   |        |   |    | ×      |
| ὑποκρίνομαι                   | × |        |   | ×  |        |
| ὑπόκρισις                     |   |        |   | ×  | ×      |
| ὑπόνοια                       |   |        |   |    | ×      |
| ὑποπτεύω                      | × |        |   | ×  |        |
| ὑποψία                        |   |        |   |    | ×      |
| ὑφοράω                        |   |        |   |    | ×      |
| φαίνω                         |   |        |   |    | ×      |
| ψευδής                        | × |        |   |    |        |
| ψευδόνειρος <sup>40</sup>     | × |        |   |    |        |
| ψεῦδος                        |   |        |   |    | ×      |

<sup>40</sup> A hapax legomenon.

|               | C                                                                                                           | L | X | AT | H                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ψεύδω         |                                                                                                             | × | × | ×  | ×                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| ψευδῶς        |                                                                                                             |   |   |    | ×                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| gnomic saying | φύσει γὰρ ἄνθρωπος,<br>ὃ γὰρ βούλεται τοῦθ'<br>ἕκαστος καὶ οἶεται;<br>εὐεξαπάτητον γὰρ<br>ἄνθρωπος δυστυχῶν |   |   |    | Καλὸν γάρ ποτε καὶ<br>τὸ ψεῦδος, ὅταν<br>ὠφελοῦν τοὺς λέγον-<br>τας μηδὲν καταβλά-<br>πτη τοὺς ἀκούοντας;<br>ἃ γὰρ ἐπιθυμεῖ ἡ<br>ψυχὴ καὶ πιστεύειν<br>φιλεῖ; ὅπερ ἴδιον τῶν<br>τὰ τελευταῖα κινδυ-<br>νεόντων, λόγων<br>ματαίων ἔσται πλάσ-<br>ματα πρὸς ὑπέρθεσιν |

### References

- Achilles Tatius. (1984), *Achilles Tatius*. Trans. S. Gaselee. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bok, Sissela. (1999), *Lying: Moral Choice in Public and Private Life*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Bowie, E. L. (1993), "Lies, Fiction and Slander in Early Greek Poetry." *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World*. Eds. Christopher Gill and T. P. Wiseman. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1–37.
- Brann, Eva T. H. (2002), *Homeric Moments: Clues to Delight in Reading the Odyssey and the Iliad*. Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books.
- Carson, Thomas L. (2010), *Lying and Deception: Theory and Practice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chariton. (1995), *Callirhoe*. Trans. and ed. G. P. Goold. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Currie, Gregory. (1990), *The Nature of Fiction*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Ekman, Paul. (2009), "Lie Catching and Microexpressions." Ed. Clancy W. Martin. *The Philosophy of Deception*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 7–135.
- Ford, Charles V. (1996), *Lies!, Lies!!, Lies!!!: The Psychology of Deceit*. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Press.
- Frank, Mark G. (2009), "Thoughts, Feelings, and Deception." *Deception: From Ancient Empires to Internet Dating*. Ed. Brooke Harrington. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 55–73.
- Gill, Christopher. (1993), "Plato on Falsehood—not Fiction." *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World*. Eds. Christopher Gill and T. P. Wiseman. Austin: University of Texas Press, 38–87.



- Gill, Christopher, and T. P. Wiseman. (1993), *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Jones, C P. (1986), *Culture and Society in Lucian*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Longus. (2009), *Daphnis and Chloe*. Xenophon of Ephesus. *Anthia and Habrocomes*. Trans. and ed. Jeffrey Henderson. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Marsh, David. (1998), *Lucian and the Latins: Humor and Humanism in the Early Renaissance*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Meibauer, Jörg. (2007), "Lying and Falsely Implicating." *Cultures of Lying: Theories and Practice of Lying in Society, Literature, and Film*. Ed. Jochen Mecke. Glienicke, Berlin: Galda + Wilch Verlag, 80–114.
- Moles, J. L. (1993), "Truth and Untruth in Herodotus and Thucydides." *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World*. Eds. Christopher Gill and T. P. Wiseman. Austin: University of Texas Press, 88–121.
- Morgan, J. R. (1993), "Make-believe and Make Believe: The Fictionality of the Greek Novels." *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World*. Eds. Christopher Gill and T. P. Wiseman. Austin: University of Texas Press, 175–229.
- Nelson, William. (1973), *Fact or Fiction: The Dilemma of the Renaissance Storyteller*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Ogden, Daniel. (2007), *In Search of the Sorcerer's Apprentice: The Traditional Tales of Lucian's Lover of Lies*. Swansea: Classical Press of Wales.
- Perseus Digital Library*. Ed. Gregory R. Crane. Tufts University. <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu>.
- Rattenbury, R. M., T. W. Lumb, and J. Maillon. (1935), *Les Éthiopiennes (Théagène et Chariclée)*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres.
- Reardon, Bryan P. (1989), *Collected Ancient Greek Novels*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Rosenmeyer, Patricia A. (2001), *Ancient Epistolary Fictions: The Letter in Greek Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Schauer, Frederick and Richard Zeckhauser. (2009), "Paltering." *Deception: From Ancient Empires to Internet Dating*. Ed. Brooke Harrington. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 38–54.
- Shibles, Warren A. (1985), *Lying: A Critical Analysis*. Whitewater, WI: Language Press.
- Sing, Christine Simone. (2007), "The Linguistics of Lying." *Cultures of Lying: Theories and Practice of Lying in Society, Literature, and Film*. Ed. Jochen Mecke. Glienicke, Berlin: Galda + Wilch Verlag, 115–126.
- Steinbrenner, Jakob. (2007), "Can Fiction Lie?" *Cultures of Lying: Theories and Practice of Lying in Society, Literature, and Film*. Ed. Jochen Mecke. Glienicke, Berlin: Galda + Wilch Verlag, 263–278.
- Smyth, John V. (2002), *The Habit of Lying: Sacrificial Studies in Literature, Philosophy, and Fashion Theory*. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press.
- Vrij, Aldert. (2008), *Detecting Lies and Deceit: Pitfalls and Opportunities*. Chichester: John Wiley.
- Weinrich, Harald. (2005), *The Linguistics of Lying and Other Essays*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Wiseman, T. P. (1993), "Lying Historians: Seven Types of Mendacity." *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World*. Eds. Christopher Gill and T. P. Wiseman. Austin: University of Texas Press, 122–146.



# IV

## Latin Literature



# Quintus Cicero's *Commentariolum*: A Philosophical Approach to Roman Elections<sup>1</sup>

ANDREW SILLETT  
Brasenose College, University of Oxford

*If something seems too good to be true, then it probably is.* This old adage has held considerable sway over the interpretation of the *Commentariolum Petitionis*. An insider's account of any run for the consulship would be of unparalleled use to one seeking to understand the nature of Roman politics in the late Republic; let alone an account purporting to represent the most intimate advice given to the man who casts the largest shadow over the Roman Republic. It would be the height of recklessness not to interrogate the authenticity of such a document with great care and attention. A due sense of caution, however, is not the only factor that leads to this text being frequently written off as a forgery. Its content contributes too. The inanity of the advice given in the *Commentariolum*, famously summed up by Peter Wiseman as: "offend nobody, make contacts everywhere, flatter, oblige, equivocate" (135), has only added to the suspicion that the author of this pamphlet had no unique or privileged perspective on the elections of 64 BC, and so was far more likely to be an imperial schoolboy than the brother of Marcus Tullius Cicero.

Having been long unable to fathom the purpose of this peculiar text, scholars have frequently called into question the notion that the *Commentariolum Petitionis* is what it makes itself out to be: a short treatise on Cicero's electoral

---

<sup>1</sup> A version of this paper was delivered as part of a seminar organized by Donncha O'Rourke and Antony Smith at the University of Oxford. I am indebted to them for providing me with the opportunity to start thinking about this topic and to Javier Martínez and Rhiannon Ash for giving me the chance to mold those ideas into their current form. Other thanks are due to Llewelyn Morgan, Miriam Griffin, Gregory Hutchinson, Stephen Heyworth and Neil McLynn for their helpful comments at various stages of the composition of this article. My principal debts, however, are owed to Nicholas Purcell, whose tutorial on the *Commentariolum Petitionis* provided me with many of the ideas that have ended up here (in one form or another), and to Ed Bispham, whose eleventh hour contribution saved the day.

campaign written by his younger brother Quintus. Starting with Eussner's and Hendrickson's attacks in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the authenticity of the work has been debated back and forth for over a century. Nardo's work from 1970 remains the best study of this debate, although several important contributions have been made since.<sup>2</sup> More than 50 years on, Robin Nisbet's challenge to the authenticity of the *Commentariolum* still sets the terms of engagement on this issue. For the text to be proved genuine, he argues, one would have to iron out its apparent textual inconsistencies and suggest some sort of point to its being written (84).

Most debate has centered on the first of these two challenges and has created a broadly-accepted consensus that the supposed philological and historical anachronisms in the text are ultimately inconclusive. Robert Morstein-Marx sums up the current state of discussion when he comments:

(O)nly two positions on the authenticity question now appear to be seriously tenable: that it is indeed...an essay in epistolary form to Marcus Cicero written by his brother in early 64 ostensibly in order to advise him on his candidacy...; or that it may be a later fabrication by someone else, but one so well-informed that it remains a first-rate source for late-Republican electoral politics. (261)

This, however, responds to only one of Nisbet's two challenges to the authenticity of the text. Regardless of what one makes of the state of the document's textual validity, its lack of a clear purpose remains suspect. A detractor could still argue, with Nisbet, that it is too rhetorical for a letter and too cynical for use in a real election, or, with Alexander, that it contains no useful advice and does nothing to improve the author's scholarly reputation (32). With the authenticity debate deadlocked on a philological level, the casting vote is given to the reader's analysis of the work's purpose. My aim here is to suggest that while the *Commentariolum* does indeed fall short of being a truly candid glimpse inside the electoral machinery of a Roman politician, it is nonetheless possible to entertain a purpose for it that makes sense of its content and supports Ciceronian authorship.

The tone of this treatise is an obvious barrier to accepting its purported authorship. We know what such didactic epistles look like from Cicero's own superficially similar letter of advice to his brother on how to govern a province. While this letter is not entirely without the vague generalities of the *Commen-*

---

<sup>2</sup> Henderson, Nisbet, Balsdon, Richardson, David et al., Ramsay and Brugisser are the main contributors (on both sides) to the bibliography of this controversy.

*tariolum*, it also has a specificity and level of technical detail that sit in marked contrast to our document. More than this, however, it is easy for us to conjecture why Marcus would write such a letter. Not only does it emphasize the fact that Quintus knows what he's doing as governor of Asia, it also shows to rather more skeptical readers that if he didn't, at least he will now. This second purpose may be rather important given the rumors that Quintus was not quite the model of provincial propriety claimed in the semi-public *ad Quintum Fratrem* 1.1; these reports are considerably more prominent in the (presumably) more private *ad Quintum Fratrem* 1.2.

Although the *Commentariolum* is perhaps a superficially similar text, the same arguments cannot be advanced in favor of its authenticity. It may have been considered necessary to prove that Quintus (and, to a lesser extent, Marcus) knew how to govern a province since the text's audience, largely based in Rome, could not rely on first-hand knowledge of that fact. If Marcus Tullius Cicero could not provide the people of Rome with first-hand evidence that he knew how to canvass for election, then no *Commentariolum* in the world was going to convince them otherwise. This is a fair argument against the authenticity of the *Commentariolum*. Why should we give such an unlikely text the benefit of the doubt when it is so hard to fathom a reason why Quintus would have written such a thing in the first place? In the search for a reasonable hypothesis that might explain exactly what sort of text we are dealing with, I choose to follow a note in Bücheler's *Q. Ciceronis Reliquiae*. In this collection he describes the work as part of the *disciplina logicae* (7–8). This idea, to my mind, deserves more attention than it has generally received.

It is my contention that the *Commentariolum Petitionis* was written as an exercise in philosophy: boiling down the process of running for Rome's highest annual office into a series of logical steps. This was a central pillar of the philosophical milieu of the first century BC, and one that Quintus would have been intimately familiar with via the philosophical and rhetorical education he received in Greece and at Rome. In what follows, I will lay out the case for Quintus' philosophical interest in the exercise of logical classification and show why the peculiar circumstances of his brother's bid for the consulship of 63 BC made it beneficial to circulate such a work.

Quintus' intellectual prowess is hardly held in the highest regard. As McDermott has it in his description of Quintus' appearances in his brother's philosophical works: "fraternal love exaggerated the quality of Quintus' intellectual mind" (703). Quintus' writings are, however, so thin on the ground as to make it difficult to make such pronouncements. We might allow that McDermott is right to say that Quintus' intellect may not have been a match for his

brother's. Quintus may not have been the Cicero brother responsible for the largest systematization of Greek philosophy into the Latin language, but we should at least allow that he was well-versed in philosophy, and probably to a degree that would have made him stand out in his day. As Rawson has made clear, the Grand Tour of Greece, later to become a standard fixture in the education of the next generation of Roman youth, was in no way a regular occurrence in the 70s BC (7–8). However, as Cicero tells us at *de Finibus* 5.1, Quintus undertook such a trip in 79 BC alongside his brother, his cousin Lucius, Atticus, and Marcus Piso.

This does not in itself make Quintus a great philosopher. It does, however, tell us that he was exposed to the discipline to an unusual degree, the idea that he took what he learnt on-board is given some weight by the numerous hints scattered through Cicero's works that demonstrate Quintus' philosophical affiliations and speak to his love for it. The rarity of philosophically-schooled contemporaries for Cicero should give us reason not to be too disparaging of Quintus' appearances as an interlocutor in Cicero's philosophical dialogues. Although friendship and kinship may have ranked highly among Cicero's reasons for casting his brother and best friend as recurring characters in his treatises, we should also consider the fact that there were very few others in Rome who could realistically have played such a role. It is not possible to say exactly what these young men might have studied while on their Greek expedition. The impression given by Cicero's accounts and later philosophical works implies that no major philosophical base was left uncovered. However, to single out one particular school, it was on this voyage that Marcus seems to have begun his life-long love affair with the Academy.

Although the post-Sullan period was an uncertain time for Plato's intellectual descendants, it was also no doubt an exciting one. After the death of their founder and a few centuries of philosophical evolution under successive scholars, the Academy underwent what is popularly described in today's educational jargon as "creative chaos." The Athenians' fateful decision to align themselves against Rome during the Mithridatic Wars created turmoil in the city's most prominent philosophical school. The scholarch of the time, Philo of Larissa, fled to Rome (where he was to remain until his death), and the grove of Academe itself was destroyed during Sulla's reprisals against the city. In an even greater change, Antiochus of Ascalon more or less officially took up the place of the absent scholarch and began to push the school away from Philo's skeptical teaching and back towards a more traditionally dogmatic approach to the Platonic corpus.



Aside from the dangers inherent in exploring this war-torn province, it is difficult to imagine a better time to be travelling in Greece and learning the developing philosophy of the Academy. It provided young Romans like the Cicero brothers with an unparalleled opportunity to combine what they had learnt in Rome under Philo with the teachings of Antiochus in Athens. The philosophy of rhetoric had recently obtained a new prominence in the curriculum, and it is impossible to imagine that this would not have drawn the attention of these young Roman statesmen-to-be. As Cicero himself notes at *Tusc.* 2.9, Philo of Larissa taught classes in rhetoric in the morning and philosophy in the afternoon.<sup>3</sup> One philosopher, Charmadas, stands out as the man most responsible for the development of Academic rhetoric in this period, and his teachings and former-pupils were of fundamental importance for the philosophical development of these budding young orators.

Relatively little can be said with much certainty about the life of Charmadas, even the dates of his death and birth are relatively uncertain, but we are in the region of 165–91 BC (see footnote 5). He began his philosophical career as a student of the great Academic-sceptic philosopher Carneades. After some time in his own philosophical school, he returned to the Academy where he attained sufficient prominence to be considered the co-founder of the so-called “Fourth Academy” alongside Philo.<sup>4</sup> Today he is remembered chiefly for his contribution to the longstanding debate on the relationship between rhetoric and philosophy.

This relationship was one of the major topics of debate in both the schools of rhetoric and of philosophy from the fifth century BC to the second century AD. Eruptions of activity can be detected among periods of relative calm in the history of this controversy, and Marcus and Quintus lived in the middle of one of these flashpoints. Philosophical debates about rhetoric covered three major points: the immorality of rhetoric; what knowledge was considered necessary for rhetoric; and whether or not rhetoric ought to be considered a *technē* (τέχνη). It is the last of these issues that has the most relevance to the *Commentariolum*.

In their edition of Cicero's *de Oratore*, James May and Jakob Wisse defined the *technē* (in Latin, *ars*) as: “(A) systematic body of real knowledge that constituted a reliable guide for attaining ...desired practical results—in the case of rhetoric, persuasion of an audience.” (23) An important element of ancient thought involved reducing various types of professional knowledge or skills to their most basic and systematic criteria.<sup>5</sup> However, no doubt thanks to the im-

<sup>3</sup> See *de Orat.* 3.110 for the fact that Philo did this in Athens as well as at Rome.

<sup>4</sup> Sext. Emp. *Pyrr. Hyp.* 1.220; Euseb. *Praep. Evang.* 14.4.16.

<sup>5</sup> Key works on the *technē* are by Dihle, Heinemann, Meissner and Schneider.

portance of public speaking in the ancient world, it is rhetoric's status as a *technē* that leaves the largest footprint in our evidence of technical philosophy.<sup>6</sup>

We can see from Cicero's later works that this particular way of thinking about public speaking made an impression on the young orator. His *de Oratore* preserves an impression of Charmadas' teachings on philosophy and rhetoric and, as the following extract shows, these teachings focused upon the implications of considering rhetoric to be a *technē*:

Saepe etiam in eam partem ferebatur oratione, ut omnino disputaret nullam artem esse dicendi... Nam primum quasi dedita opera neminem scriptorem artis ne mediocriter quidem disertum fuisse dicebat... eloquentissimos autem homines, qui ista nec didicissent nec omnino scire curassent, is innumerabilis quosdam nominabat... Artem vero negabat esse ullam, nisi quae cognitis penitusque perspectis et in unum exitum spectantibus et numquam fallentibus rebus contineretur; haec autem omnia, quae tractarentur ab oratoribus, dubia esse et incerta; quoniam et dicerentur ab eis, qui omnia ea non plane tenerent, et audirentur ab eis, quibus non scientia esset tradenda, sed exigui temporis aut falsa aut certe obscura opinio. Quid multa? Sic mihi tum persuadere videbatur neque artificium ullum esse dicendi neque quemquam posse, nisi qui illa, quae a doctissimis hominibus in philosophia dicerentur, cognosset, aut callide aut copiose dicere. *De Orat.* 1.90–3.

Often Charmadas was even carried away by his own argument so far as to contend that an art of speaking did not exist at all... In the first place he asserted that none of the writers of rhetorical handbooks—as if they were doing this on purpose—had been even a moderately accomplished speaker... And on the other hand he named really eloquent men, actually a countless list of them, who had never learned these rhetorical precepts, or shown the slightest interest in doing so... According to Charmadas, nothing could be an art unless it consisted of matters that were known and could be thoroughly scrutinized, directed toward one end, and completely certain. All the subjects dealt with by the orators, however, were doubtful and uncertain, since the speakers understood none of them accurately, and the listeners were not to be given real knowledge, but merely an opinion for the moment, false, or at best unclear. Why say more? He seemed to me, on that occasion, to demonstrate persuasively that no art of speaking existed, and that no one could speak resourcefully or copiously unless he had become acquainted

---

<sup>6</sup> See Vickers (84–143), Barnes and Roochnik for the state of this debate in antiquity.

with the teachings of the most learned in the field of philosophy. (Translation from May and Wisse 2001)

We should not take the vehemence of Charmadas' argument against the identification of rhetoric with a *technē* as a sign that this was a dogmatic view held by his successors at the Academy. The academic skepticism of the Fourth Academy required that pupils be able to argue either side of an issue. A strong denunciation of the *ars dicendi*, such as that above, had to be matched by an equally forceful rebuttal of that position.

As Dante Nardo has already argued, the late Roman Republic was the age of the *technē* (123–128). The leading intellects of Rome were beginning to categorize their institutions into *technai*: setting out everything from divination to the Latin language as systematic bodies of knowledge made up of specific, knowable criteria. Many of Marcus Cicero's later philosophical works were part of this trend. Similarly, the only surviving work attributed to his brother can be seen to take up the Greek philosophical theory that certain things can be reduced to a series of rules, and to apply it to the world of Roman electoral politics.

Although the *Commentariolum* is our most complete surviving source for Roman elections, we should not imagine that it was composed in an atmosphere where interest in the subject was in any way lacking. As Jeffrey Tatum recently commented, electoral practices were coming under renewed scrutiny: "(T)roubling qualities of the canvass were exacerbated in the sixties by the expansion of the citizenry that was completed in the census of 69, a development that could plausibly be expected to have stimulated reflections on the nature of political campaigning and its normative practices." (115) In his article, Tatum draws out the problematic relationship that was inherent in Rome's practice of sustaining an oligarchy through constant elections. He argues that Quintus' handbook is an intervention on his brother's behalf in the debate on whether a true Roman should canvass for election. He points to several texts that support his contention that the Roman aristocracy found the idea of canvassing for election utterly distasteful. In the *de Oratore*, for example, Cicero has Crassus describe how, when canvassing for office, he told Scaevola to avert his eyes lest he witness his friend debase himself in his craven wooing of the *populus*. The most famous example, however, of this noble disdain for the campaign trail comes just over a decade later with Cato. His outright refusal to canvass is noted by both Dio and Plutarch as decisive in his failed bid for the consulship of 51 BC.<sup>7</sup>

The *Commentariolum*, Tatum argues, is designed to please both sides of the debate: Cicero had enough of the aristocratic ethos to find electioneering rather

<sup>7</sup> Dio 40.58; Plut. *Cat. Min.* 49.

objectionable, but was not so out of touch that he would avoid doing it completely. This notion fits neatly into Cicero's strategy of alienating as few supporters as possible on all sides of the Roman political spectrum. However, for the debate on the acceptability of electioneering to be the foundation of the *Commentariolum*, it seems to me that it would be necessary for Cicero to be associated with being either overly keen to engage in this grubby practice or worryingly aloof. I know of no evidence for the latter charge, and Alexander's evidence that Cicero was famed in antiquity as a notoriously corrupt canvasser (based on Calenus' diatribe in Dio 46.1–28) does not seem decisive to me, since at no point in that speech is the specific charge of electoral malpractice actually levelled at him (371–380). As a result it seems unlikely that Quintus would feel the need to circulate such a work as this in order to reassure potential voters that Cicero sat at a happy middle point between these two poles.

Rather than putting all our focus on the political and social debates that swirled around Cicero's candidature, I would like to argue that we might understand the *Commentariolum* better if we focus on the cultural circumstances of its composition. The text of the *Commentariolum Petitionis* provides plenty of evidence to suggest that a philosophical education was an important guiding force when it came to writing this text. When describing the handicap of his brother's *novitas*, for example, Quintus compares and contrasts the electioneering of another *homo novus* Gaius Coelius, making considerable use of the vocabulary of the *technē*:

Quanto melior tibi fortuna petitionis data est quam nuper homini novo, C. Coelio! ille cum duobus hominibus ita nobilissimis petebat ut tamen in iis omnia pluris essent quam ipsa nobilitas, summa ingenia, summus pudor, plurima beneficia, summa ratio ac diligentia petendi; ac tamen eorum alterum Coelius, cum multo inferior esset genere, superior nulla re paene, superavit. Qua re tibi, si facies ea quae natura et studia quibus semper usus es largiuntur, quae temporis tui ratio desiderat, quae potes, quae debes, non erit difficile certamen cum iis competitoribus qui nequaquam sunt tam genere insignes quam vitiis nobiles.<sup>8</sup>

How much better luck has fallen to you in your canvass than to C. Coelius, another “new man,” a while ago! He stood against two men of the highest nobility, yet whose nobility was the least of their assets—great intelligence, high conscience, many claims to gratitude, great theoretical knowledge of and perseverance in electioneering. Yet Coelius, though much inferior in

<sup>8</sup> *Comm.* 11–12.

birth and superior in almost nothing, defeated one of them. So for you, if you do what you are well endowed for doing by nature and by the studies which you have always practiced—what the occasion demands, what you can and should do—it will not be hard to contest with these competitors who are by no means as noble in birth as they are notable in vice. (Translation from Shackleton-Bailey Loeb.)

Several parts of this paragraph take for granted the idea that running for office is a systematic process. The general linguistic register here tends subtly towards the philosophy of the *technē*. This is notable in the formulation “*natura et studia quibus semper usus es.*” Quintus would have his brother make use of the skills he has picked up in his attempt to overcome his competitors. This race, he argues, is not simply about some innate *dunamis*: electoral victory involves a systematic process that can be studied and learnt as much as it involves his *natura*.

Much the same could be said for Quintus’ use of the word *ratio*. Alongside *studia*, this comes close to capturing the meaning of the Greek *technē*. It appears twice in this short passage: as one of the specific skills Cicero has learnt which make him an effective campaigner (the “*temporis ratio*”); and it appears as one of the advantages belonging to the opponents of Cicero’s predecessor Coelius—they possessed “*summa ratio ac diligentia petendi*” (“a great theoretical knowledge of and perseverance in electioneering”).

Alongside *ratio* and *studia*, words associated with the philosophy of the *technē*, the actual translation, *ars*, also appears in the concluding sections of the *Commentariolum*. In the first instance it refers to Cicero’s reliance on an *ars* to give the people what they want (§50), in the second it refers to making use of an *ars* to escape from the jealous gossip of his opponents (§54). Alongside normalizing the rhetoric of the *technē* in Roman political life by dropping the word *ars* into places like these, Quintus also identifies it with the more conventional vocabulary of the Roman canvass: *labor* and *diligentia* in the first instance, *consilium* in the second.

Alongside these examples, a cognate of the word *ars* also appears to describe the consul of 75, Gaius Cotta:

C. Cotta, in ambitione artifex, dicere solebat se operam suam, quod non contra officium rogaretur, polliceri solere omnibus, impertire iis apud quos optime poni arbitretur.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> *Comm.* 47.

Gaius Cotta, a theoretical master of electioneering, used to say that unless duty forbade a request, he used to promise his help to all, but actually give it those in whom he judged he was making the best investment.

As Nardo has already argued, *artifex* here is being used to translate that essential corollary of the τέχνη—the τεχνίτης. Although *artifex* does not always carry a philosophical tone in Latin, we accept the use of *artifex* in the *de Oratore* as a reference to the *technē* because we know that its author was steeped in that philosophy and because the *de Oratore* explicitly concerns itself with said debate.<sup>10</sup> One can make a similar case for the *Commentariolum Petitionis*. This document seeks to show canvassing for election to be a systematic and learnable skillset, and when we encounter the word *artifex* in such a context, it is not circular to interpret it as “one who has become a master of a systematic skillset.”

Indeed, the language of the *technē* is present from the very beginning of the *Commentariolum*. In light of what I have set out above, we can read the preface as a more-or-less straightforward introduction to a work with a very real vein of philosophy running through it:

Etsi tibi omnia suppetunt ea quae consequi ingenio aut usu homines aut diligentia possunt, tamen amore nostro non sum alienum arbitratus ad te perscribere ea quae mihi veniebant in mentem dies ac noctes de petitione tua cogitanti, non ut aliquid ex his novi addisceres, sed ut ea quae in re dispersa atque infinita viderentur esse ratione et distributione sub uno aspectu ponerentur. Quamquam plurimum natura valet, tamen videtur in paucorum mensium negotio posse simulatio naturam vincere.<sup>11</sup>

Although you are furnished with all that men can acquire by ability, experience or application, I thought it in keeping with our affection to write in full to you what has been coming into my mind as I think day and night about your canvass—not that you would learn anything new from it, but for the sake of bringing into one focus, by logical classification, matters which in real life seem disconnected and indeterminate. Though nature is strong indeed, yet a façade can, it seems, overcome the natural character for an affair of a few months.

<sup>10</sup> *De Orat.* 1.51 is a good example of this, but it appears frequently in this guise throughout the *de Oratore*.

<sup>11</sup> *Comm.* 1.

The word “*simulatio*” creates problems of interpretation.<sup>12</sup> I should like to approach it in line with the overtly philosophical use of the word *ratio* in the previous sentence. As it is put in conflict with *natura*, I would be inclined to read *simulatio* in the sense of its second OLD definition, that is to say, the idea of a speaker putting on a façade. Cicero’s use of the verb *simulare* at *de Natura Deorum* 2.168 to mean “following a philosophical position” as opposed to working from one’s own nature (using *animus* in place of *natura*) helps to explain the sense of this complicated sentence: the precepts set out in the *Commentariolum Petitionis* will allow the reader, whatever their background, to grasp the *technē* of running for election as consul.

This is an important step on the way to providing that elusive reason for the composition of this document. If we think of the *Commentariolum Petitionis* as a self-consciously philosophical exercise showing that running for election is a learnable *technē*, then we can understand why the advice contained therein is so seemingly bland and obvious. This is an important point in itself, and (regardless of where one stands on the question of authorship) it is an important criterion when it comes to thinking about what sort of text this is. The mere fact, however, that Quintus had an active interest in philosophy and lived during the *floruit* of the Roman *technē* does in itself not prove that he was the author of this handbook. The question still holds: what possible benefit could accrue to his brother’s run for the consulship as a result of Quintus circulating this text? A convincing reason, however, does exist. Like most matters in the 60s BC, it concerns Pompey.

Treating Cicero’s run for the consulship as *technē* seems at first to be rather counter-intuitive: why deny his brother some innate *dunamis* that would be the key to propelling him to the front of the pack? His insistence that Marcus can be elected if he follows a set of relatively simple instructions is initially difficult to square with Marcus’ motto relating to his political career:

πολλὸν ἀριστεύειν καὶ ὑπείροχον ἔμμεναι ἄλλων.<sup>13</sup>

Far to excel, and to exceed all others.

If Cicero was indeed as keen on this saying as he claims in the letter to Quintus in which it appears, why should he take anything but umbrage at his brother’s decision to circulate a short treatise on how utterly normal and run-of-the-mill his attainment of the consulship should be?

<sup>12</sup> Two popular translations are “assumed personality” and “fraud.”

<sup>13</sup> *Q. Fr.* 3.6.4.

There is a sensible and widely applicable precaution to be taken here. If a source goes out of its way to stress how unremarkable it is, one can be almost certain that it is anything but. In the case of the *Commentariolum*, Quintus' insistence that his brother's election can be reduced to a simple step-by-step guide that largely consists of obvious and not particularly underhand tactics should alert us to the possibility that there was at the very least a perception that Cicero's consular campaign was rather suspect. We can look to the *Commentariolum* itself for some proof that Cicero's run for the consulship of 63 was viewed with some mistrust.

Although at the time of writing Pompey was campaigning in the East against Mithridates, he appears three times in the *Commentariolum Petitionis*.<sup>14</sup> In all of these passages he is spoken of with a degree of caution. The first highlights Pompey's problematic connection with *popularis* politics. While the exact meaning of the term *popularis* is debated, it is clear (especially when lined up with the second passage on Pompey's enemies) that speaking *populariter* in Pompey's cause put Cicero on the back-foot with certain other elements of society whose support he would need if he was to be elected consul.<sup>15</sup>

This was a problem primarily in terms of getting into office. Pompey's political career had met with stern opposition from many political figures whose support would be important for Cicero's consular campaign. Why should they feel inclined to reward the man who had helped carry the Manilian law in the teeth of their opposition? As the third passage of *Commentariolum* makes clear, however, an association with Pompey, whether real or perceived, carried its own electoral benefits—the mention of his name could be relied upon to galvanize the votes of a significant mass of people. Hence Quintus' urging here that this connection should be made known. This strategy, however, contained its own risk, one that would arise in the event of Cicero being successfully elected after nailing his colors to Pompey's mast. How could he avoid the impression that he had been elected as a Pompeian stooge, as a safe pair of hands to guide Rome's domestic politics during Pompey's absence in the East?

To return again to Cicero's childhood motto, reaching the top through the patronage of a more powerful figure was not what being a consul was traditionally about, and it certainly does not seem to be how Cicero conceived of it. In fact, we can see Cicero straining to separate his consulship from the overbearing personage of Gnaeus Pompey in his later behavior as consul. His dispatch to Pompey cataloguing the achievements of his consulship (which was unduly long

<sup>14</sup> *Comm.* 5, 14–15, 51.

<sup>15</sup> For a full and recent treatment of the use of the terms *populares* and *optimates* in Roman political debate, see Robb 2010.



and boastful, according to the Bobbio scholiast on *Pro Plancio* 85) suggests a man eager to present himself as an autonomous ally of Pompey, rather than his dependent. As Cicero himself puts it in a follow-up letter to Pompey in 62: a Laelius to his Scipio.<sup>16</sup>

This has an important bearing on why the author of the *Commentariolum Petitionis* takes up the philosophy of the *technē* and applies it to the world of Roman electioneering. The ultimate effect of the *Commentariolum*'s cataloguing of the routine steps that Cicero must take to be elected is to imply that his bid for the consulship of 63 is a humdrum, everyday affair; a campaign that Quintus happily lays bare to the reader who could follow the step-by-step guide to Cicero's above-board canvassing.<sup>17</sup>

While this helps to portray the campaign as (on the whole) a clean affair in order to circumvent charges of electoral malpractice, I would like to advance the thesis that the *Commentariolum* is far more important in terms of securing Cicero a political free-hand for his consulship. This document of Cicero's independent electioneering negates the possibility that his exceptional rise to high office could have been organized behind the scenes by shady Pompeian powers as a pay-off for his earlier support. This was above all important for Cicero's conception of himself as a consul. As we see in his constant later fretting over his consular status, Cicero saw the consulship as more than just an end in itself. For him it was a means to become one of Rome's senior statesmen for the rest of his life.<sup>18</sup> It is difficult indeed to imagine that he would have wanted to stand at the front of a list of Pompeian consuls in the manner of the later Afranius or Gabinius if he could help it.

This argument provides an answer to Nisbet's second challenge to the authenticity of the *Commentariolum Petitionis*: to specify a reason why Quintus Cicero would ever have written a document of this nature. To reiterate: there are many clues in this text that suggest it should be read as a work of philosophy. As such, it is superficially a *jeu d'esprit* (an *ineptia*, in Roman phraseology), but one concealing a serious purpose. This portrayal of Cicero's campaign as a cata-

<sup>16</sup> *Fam.* 5.7.3.

<sup>17</sup> Although I do not have the space to go into it here, Cicero's status as *homo novus* must have some bearing on why his consular campaign should be known to consist of the basic, everyday steps a candidate should be taking. The *Commentariolum* demonstrates that Cicero, though a nobody from Arpinum, was no novice in the world of Roman politics, while simultaneously showing that he had the uncorrupted *virtus* of a *novus* and would not be chasing election on the back of the sort of noble vices later catalogued by Sallust in a speech attributed to Marius in the *Bellum Jugurthinum* (85).

<sup>18</sup> For Cicero's concerns about his standing as a *consularis*, see Lintott 2008, 130–211, esp. 149–166.

logue of unremarkable events dispels any notion that his potential election to the consulship would be anything other than a result of his own hard work and his worthiness as a candidate. His need to do this was especially acute in light of his perceived proximity to Pompey; political freedom from whom he wished to secure for his year in office and reputation thereafter.

It has been pointed out to me that there is a final step to take in the logic of this argument.<sup>19</sup> Even if the reader takes nothing else away from this paper, I hope I have shown that the *Commentariolum Petitionis* was most plausibly conceived along philosophical lines. This much should be relatively uncontroversial. If, however, we are to accept that in addition to this there are compelling reasons for thinking that this document served a real purpose in Cicero's campaign for the consulship, then one might ask why he would have entrusted its composition to his younger brother.

I have detailed the arguments in favor of seeing Quintus as a philosopher, but the fact is that we have no direct evidence for this position, just conjecture. We do, however, have a large amount of concrete evidence that at least one person working on Cicero's electoral campaign had a strong philosophical background; someone moreover who was not shy about ventriloquizing Quintus when writing philosophical treatises.<sup>20</sup> Occam's razor suggests that Marcus is the more likely of the two Cicero brothers to have written a philosophical treatise in support of a campaign for the consulship of 63 BC. Ascribing the authorship of the *Commentariolum Petitionis* to Quintus may well have been an act of forgery, but it may have been a much older one than is usually supposed.

### References

- Alexander, M. C. (2009), "The 'Commentariolum petitionis' as an attack on election campaigns," *Athenaeum* 97: 31–57, 369–95.
- Balsdon, J. P. V. D. (1963), "The *Commentariolum Petitionis*," *CQ* 13 n.s.: 242–250.
- Barnes, J. (1986), "Is rhetoric an art?" *DARG Newsletter* 2: 2–22.
- Brugisser, P. (1984), "Le *Commentariolum Petitionis*, acte électorale?" *LEC* 52: 115–130.
- Bücheler, F. (1869), *Quinti Ciceronis Reliquiae*. Leipzig: Teubner.
- David, J.-M. et al. (1973), "Le 'Commentariolum Petitionis' de Quintus Cicéron. État de la question et étude prosopographique," *ANRW* I.3: 239–277.
- Dihle, A. (1986), "Philosophie - Fachwissenschaft - Allgemeinbildung," *Aspects de la Philosophie hellénistique, Entretiens Hardt* 32: 185–231.

<sup>19</sup> My thanks to Ed Bispham for making this clear.

<sup>20</sup> For only the most extensive of these acts of ventriloquism, see the first book of *de Divinatione*.

- Eussner, A. (1872), *Commentariolum Petitionis examinavit et ex Buecheri recensione passim emendatum edidit Adam Eussner*. Würzburg.
- Henderson, M. I. (1950), "De Commentariolo Petitionis," *JRS* 40: 8–21.
- Hendrickson, G. L. (1892), "On the Authenticity of the *Commentariolum Petitionis* of Quintus Cicero," *AJPh* 13: 200–212.
- Heinimann F. (1961), "Eine vorplatonische Theorie der τέχνη," *MH* 18: 105–130.
- Lintott, A. W. (2008), *Cicero as Evidence*. Oxford: OUP.
- May, J. M. and J. Wisse. (2001), *Cicero: On the Ideal Orator*. Oxford: OUP.
- McDermott, W. C. (1971), "Q. Cicero," *Historia* 20: 702–717.
- Meissner, B. (1999), *Die technologische Fachliteratur der Antike*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag.
- Morstein-Marx, R. (1998), "Publicity, popularity and patronage in the *Commentariolum Petitionis*," *ClAnt* 17: 259–288.
- Nardo, D. (1970), *Il "Commentariolum Petitionis": la propaganda elettorale nella "ars" di Quinto Cicerone*. Padua: Liviana.
- Nisbet, R. G. M. (1961), "The *Commentariolum Petitionis*: some arguments against authenticity," *JRS* 51: 84–87.
- Ramsay, J. T. (1980), "A reconstruction of Q. Gallius' trial for *ambitus*: one less reason for doubting the authenticity of the *Commentariolum Petitionis*," *Historia* 29: 402–421.
- Rawson, E. (1985), *Intellectual Life in the Late Roman Republic*. London: Duckworth.
- Richardson, J. S. (1971), "The 'Commentariolum Petitionis,'" *Historia* 20: 436–442.
- Robb, M. A. (2010), *Beyond Populares and Optimates: Political Language in the Late Republic*. Stuttgart: Steiner.
- Roochnik, D. (1994), "Is rhetoric an art?" *Rhetorica* 12: 127–154.
- Schneider, (1989), H. *Das griechische Technikverständnis*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- Tatum, J. (2007), "Alterum est tamen boni viri, alterum boni petitoris: the good man canvases," *Phoenix* 61: 109–135.
- Vickers, B. (1988), *In Defence of Rhetoric*. Oxford: Clarendon.
- Wiseman, T. P. (1971), *New Men in the Roman Senate 139 B.C.–A.D. 14*. Oxford: OUP.



# Not Without my Mother: The Obligate Rhetoric of Daphne's Transformation

KLAUS LENNARTZ  
University of Hamburg

Discussions of the so-called double versions of portions of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, when "an editor must decide whether to reject one as an interpolation, accept both as separate drafts by the author, or (least likely of the three) accept both as Ovid's final version,"<sup>1</sup> seem to enjoy no special popularity these days. This is surprising, for Richard Tarrant's Oxford text (Tarrant 2004), with its joy for rigorous decisions, after Anderson's conservative edition (Anderson 1982), left ample room for contradiction (or agreement). As far as I know, no more detailed discussion of the matter has been given since,<sup>2</sup> and although Tarrant 2004, xxxv has announced a detailed justification of his verdicts on individual *loci* and, meanwhile, the matter deserves a certain ἐποχή, I want, in the sense of *philologia perennis*, to milk the goat once more: perhaps some more drops will be revealed? Thus, I would like to mention one *locus vexatissimus*, Met. 1, 544–547a, viz. the introduction of Daphne's transformation.<sup>3</sup>

In Met. 1.525–547 the poet describes Daphne's escape, one of the most prominent *loci Ovidiani* of all. And Ovid, right here, in this first erotic episode<sup>4</sup> of the epic, after the "Hesiodic" (cosmogony; myth of the eras; giants; second creation) and the "Pindaric" opening (Apollo and the foundation of the Pythian games), placed all of his art.<sup>5</sup> After the paradoxical zeugma 526<sup>6</sup> *fugit cumque*

---

<sup>1</sup> Tarrant 1982, 354.

<sup>2</sup> The exception is Galasso 2006. Literature on Ovid is inexhaustible, of course, so that surely some items have escaped my notice.

<sup>3</sup> The last detailed articles on the textual problem seem to be Blänsdorf 1980 and Murgia 1984, though with a different result. Zwierlein 1999, 243–245 argued for the Peneus version (A) as interpolated already in early imperial time.

<sup>4</sup> Logically, therefore, the introduction of Cupid *in persona* (Ludwig 1965, 20).

<sup>5</sup> See also n. 11.

<sup>6</sup> Ovid, the poet of the mythical, material, and stylistic paradox *par excellence*, as could easily be shown, starting from Bernbeck 1967, 100–113.

*ipso verba imperfecta reliquit*, there follows a typically Ovidian “eroticism of shame” (527–530):<sup>7</sup> *tum quoque visa decens; nudabant corpora venti, / obvi-  
aque adversas vibrabant flamina vestes, / et levis impulsos retro dabat aura  
capillos / auctaque forma fuga est*. But Apollo—would you expect otherwise?—  
became only more violently attracted, so that finally, after the Homeric simile  
unfolded in 533–538, for Daphne, totally exhausted as she is, there remains one  
last resort, the ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἀπαλλαγῆναι (543–547a):<sup>8</sup>

- 543 viribus absumptis expalluit illa citaeque  
544 [victa labore fugae “Tellus” ait, “hisce, vel istam,  
545 quae facit ut laedar, mutando perde figuram.”]  
544a victa labore fugae spectans Peneidas<sup>9</sup> undas,  
546 “fer, pater” inquit “opem, si flumina numen habetis;  
547 qua nimium placui, mutando perde figuram.”

“544sqq. mirifice variant codd.,” as Tarrant noted in *apparatu*. Well, even with  
all the different orders of the verses in our manuscripts, the finding remains the  
same: a version in which Daphne calls Peneus for help (A) competes with a  
version in which she asks Earth to save her from being touched by the gods  
(B),<sup>10</sup> and each of the versions, in a “seit Generationen geführten” confrontation,  
either has been maintained as genuinely Ovidian at the expense of the other, or  
both have been recognized as Ovidian “alternative versions.”<sup>11</sup> “Man soll-  
te...den Mut zu dem Bekenntnis aufbringen, daß unser Wissen und unsere Me-  
thoden einfach nicht ausreichen, um vernünftigerweise eine dieser Thesen mit

<sup>7</sup> Ovidian “eroticism” of shame / fear / wrath: 4.230 *ipse timor decuit* (Leucothoe), 4.330 *sed et erubuisse decebat* (Hermaphrodite), 6.167 *et, quantum ira sinit, formosa* (Niobe), 7.730–733 *tristis erat (sed nulla tamen formosior illa / esse potest tristi) ... / ... / ... dolor ipse decebat* (Procris and Cephalus), 11.389 *pulchros, regina, piosque / pone metus* (Ceyx to Alcyone) and many other places.

<sup>8</sup> Text of Tarrant’s edition (2004, 21–22); Greek formulation: see below n. 37.

<sup>9</sup> For the feminine adjective, which appears instead of the incorrect *Peneydos* in codices from the 12th century onwards (as original reading, *coniectura palmaris* or retrograde influence?), see Bömer 1969, 151.

<sup>10</sup> The alphabetical order of the two versions is not documentary, but traditional.

<sup>11</sup> I won’t linger further on the view sometimes held that Ovid originally let Daphne call *both* deities for help (“complete version”: Ritschl 1842, Slater 1919 [later withdrawn: Dursteler 1940, 9 n. 20], Anderson’s Teubneriana<sup>2</sup> 1982, 18–19, Murgia 1984, Richmond 2001, 74); in my opinion, this “solution” is untenable due to the convoluted evidence of transmission as well as the content (N. Heinsius ad loc.: “inepta oratio vix invocato patre ad Tellurem convertitur”) and stylistic reasons (“repetition of verbs of speech”), vainly defended by Murgia 1984, 219–223; not least for that reason, I have placed value on the special *care* taken with the Daphne story by Ovidius.

Anspruch auf Wissenschaftlichkeit vorzutragen.”<sup>12</sup> This insight, “das Unerforschliche nicht zu erzwingen versuchen,” is reserved for the great scholars, after all. We sons of *epigoni* incorrigibly want “alles herausbekommen..., der trümmerhaften Überlieferung zum Trotz.”<sup>13</sup>

Let’s start with two studies, emanating from paleographical observations and presented with great meticulousness by Jürgen Blänsdorf and Charles Murgia—in which the fact that the scholars are guided by their observations to very different conclusions must be noted. Both succeed, in any case, in proving that Hugo Magnus’ reconstruction<sup>14</sup> of the original text of the main witnesses M (Marcianus Florentinus 225 saec. xi<sup>2</sup>) and N (Neapolitanus Bibl. Nat. F. IV 3, saec. xi<sup>ex.</sup> vel xii<sup>in.</sup>) can hardly be right,<sup>15</sup> and both confirm the sober manuscript authority of M<sup>ac</sup>N<sup>ac</sup> for the Tellus version (B).<sup>16</sup> Blänsdorf thereby (in the tradition of Magnus)<sup>17</sup> constitutes/specifies the Tellus version (B) in the following way: 544 *victa labore fugae* “Tellus,” ait, “*hisce vel istam* / 545 *quae facit ut laedar, mutando perde figuram*.” Accordingly, the other three verses spread over the Peneus version (A): 544a *victa labore fugae spectans Peneidas undas* / 546 “*fer, pater,*” inquit “*opem, si flumina numen habetis;* / 547 *qua nimium placui, mutando perde figuram*.” Common as it is, this constitution of the two versions contradicts the information provided in 1984 by Murgia’s findings:<sup>18</sup> As Murgia, recognized expert in the field of Latin textual tradition, on the basis of autopsy (“evidently”) has found,<sup>19</sup> there has been a *double* erasure in N after 544, and an original text, “not visible in N” (but that, as becomes clear through M and *argumentum a contrario*, was *qua nimium placui mutando perde figuram*), in a first stage “was supplanted with another line by N<sup>2</sup>” (viz. by 545 *quae facit ut laedar, mutando perde figuram*, as Blänsdorf recognized from the evi-

<sup>12</sup> Bömer 1969, 171, who is to be consulted also for doxography (169–172). Tarrant’s decision is evident from the text given above.

<sup>13</sup> The citations are from Eduard Fraenkel’s letter of 21 March 1946 to Günther Jachmann (Prete 1987, 67–68); the thought originates from Goethe (Pfeiffer 1934/1960, 246) and also Plato (most clearly in rep. 2.360e8).

<sup>14</sup> Magnus 1905, 197.

<sup>15</sup> See also Tarrant 2004, 21 in app.

<sup>16</sup> See also Galasso 2006, 111.

<sup>17</sup> Magnus 1905, 195; see also e. g. Emonds 1941, 199, Bömer 1969, 169 and many others; Murgia 1984, 219 n. 41 was, to my knowledge, the first to criticize this distribution of verses in the two versions.

<sup>18</sup> Murgia 1984, 215.

<sup>19</sup> Tarrant’s app. ad loc. (Tarrant 2004, 21), however, shows no trace of this notice, although the reader is referred to Murgia’s article. Tarrant has compared all manuscripts by microfilm and in some cases controlled them *in situ* (ibid. vii). An investigation in this respect by myself was neither possible in this context, nor would it have signified a decision.

dent traces found in N), “and this subsequently erased by N<sup>3</sup>, who substituted two lines,” namely 547a and 545, that had been wiped out in its place. The same “corrector”<sup>20</sup> changed 544 to 544a and added 546 after 544a. His motive was to bring into MN the missing Peneus version (A) not only as marginalia, but to harmonize (A) just as perfectly as possible with the present Tellus version (B). Murgia’s further conclusion from the “Italian” line HM<sup>ac</sup>N<sup>ac</sup><sup>21</sup> that these operations indicate a *main text* of four verses in the common original, viz. *victa labore fugae tellus ait hisce vel istam / qua nimium placui mutando perde figuram / fer pater inquit opem si flumina numen habetis / quae facit ut laedar mutando perde figuram*, firstly, however, hardly matches MN’s procedure;<sup>22</sup> secondly, it doesn’t explain the traceless failure of 547 in H<sup>23</sup>; and, thirdly, it is unlikely not least due to the sequence 545–546 in H, in combination with the fact that H gives 545 in the form *que fecit ut ledar etc.* (rightly highlighted by Blänsdorf 1980, 145).<sup>24</sup> Much more likely, in my opinion, are secondary inclusions of glosses or marginalia, of the type Blänsdorf l. c. has proposed to adopt.

We thus obtain, as outlined by Murgia, in the “purer” “Italian line” of the tradition (M<sup>ac</sup>N<sup>ac</sup> (H)), a reconstructed Tellus version (B) in the form 544 *victa labore fugae “Tellus,” ait, “hisce vel istam / 547 qua nimium placui, mutando perde figuram,”* and in future should assume *this* form and operate with it.<sup>25</sup>

So far, so...bad: for it was doubtless the three verses of the Peneus version (A) that the late antique Ovid-narrator, pseudo-Lactantius, read in the main text of his Ovid (cf. Ps Lact. Plac. fab. Ov. 1, 9, p. 635, 16 M. *effugere cupiens*

<sup>20</sup> Galasso 2006, 110 recognized the “lettore, che ha operato nella prima metà del xiii sec., riconoscibile per una particolarità: inizia i suoi interventi in beneventana e li prosegue e conclude in gotica” (with reference to Magistrale 1998, 90).

<sup>21</sup> For the “French Line,” the same result is achieved by Murgia by various operations that do not appear conclusive to me; for the “Italian” line MN to include the Londiniensis Bibl Brit. Harleianus 2610 saec. x (H, formerly ε) see Tarrant, in Reynolds 1983, 279, and Murgia 1984, 214.

<sup>22</sup> Both copyists would then independently have selected, from a main text of four verses of their original, the elimination of the two verses 545.546, which is neither impossible nor probable.

<sup>23</sup> If “the editor who produced its text supplanted 547 with 545” (Murgia 1984, 219) from an assumed four verses main text 544.547.545.546, then 545 should come to stand *in rasura*.

<sup>24</sup> H’s perfect *fecit*, in my opinion, is explained the best as singular “emendation” of *facit* after *placui* (and not as a simple commentary [so Richmond 2001, 474 A. 86]): H’s writer, given the sequence 544.547 in the main text of his original, when finishing 544, chose to insert 545, which was alternatively listed as *supra script* or marginal to 547 (whereby he “improved” *facit* to *fecit*), and then added the “missing” verse of the now preferred marginalia.

<sup>25</sup> See Murgia 1984, 219 n. 41; so e.g. Zwierlein 1999, 243 without further comment.



*patrem invocavit, ut virginitati suae, quam sibi permiserat, ferret auxilium. cuius ille auditis precibus filiam deorum auxilio,*<sup>26</sup> *ut vim effugeret, in laurum convertit*), while he did not have the Tellus version (B) at his disposal at all, or at least only as something marginal and neglectable.<sup>27</sup> Thus it follows that a clarification of the problem of authenticity of the two versions is simply not attainable by analysis of the handwritten material still extant. Nor is, in my opinion, the conclusion of Blänsdorf applicable (1980, 147; I add my criticisms of his closing process in parenthesis): “Die Überlieferung weist also darauf, daß in der ältesten rekonstruierbaren Form des Textes die Tellusversion im Haupttext stand, die Peneusversion die Marginalvariante war” (in my opinion this is evincible only for the still extant manuscript tradition, not for pseudo-Lactantius, cf. n. 26). “Dies ist der erste Grund, warum die These..., die Tellusversion sei späte Interpolation, nicht richtig sein kann” (why not? Magnus 1905, 211 sees the Tellus version originating in the 5th century, so that it would have time to penetrate our tradition as the main text). “Wenn aber die Peneusversion, die in der Forschung unbestritten als ovidisch gilt, in der handschriftlichen Überlieferung sekundär ist, so muß auch die Tellusfassung echt sein” (I do not understand this conclusion: if two mutually exclusive versions, including one original and one fake, existed quite widespread in time, couldn’t each of them figure in the main text of some exemplar?).

The Peneus version (A) and Tellus version (B), I regret, bring the same weight to the scale and it is up to the judges to spread the points according to *internal* criteria. And here, perhaps, not all is yet said and done.

For, struggling with the intricate situation and the basic arguments of transmission, scholars seem to me to have neglected so far to draw the necessary conclusions from the *rhetorical structure* of the Tellus version (B); what I propose to do now.

<sup>26</sup> *deorum auxilio* (~ *si flumina numen habetis*): not by Tellus! The phrase thereby indicates that pseudo-Lactantius is in no hurry here; see next note.

<sup>27</sup> Murgia’s statement that “the lack of mention of Tellus may be a result of condensation...or may reflect a text that was already corrupt,” in its first part, in my opinion, is methodologically inadmissible (and Murgia’s escape in his defense of a “full version”) due to the *status quaestionis*, and in its second part collides with the *interpretatio facilior* of the Peneus version (A) being in the main text of Lactantius. My second allegation also counts against Blänsdorf’s conjecture (1980, 151) that “Lactantius Placidus...aufgrund der Einfügungszeichen die Marginalfassung (A) für die Fassung letzter Hand halten konnte.” Still too weak, it seems to me, is the formulation of Galasso 2006, 110, “Lo pseudo-Lattanzio Placido...mostra di conoscere la versione in cui il padre Dafne implora il padre.” In the eyes of pseudo-Lactantius, the Peneus version (A) was no more and no less than the normal Ovidian (main) text.

The analysis should be carried out in several steps, and at first two observations must be made. First, we should remember the nomenclatural and especially narrative anchoring of Daphne's descent from Peneus in Ovid (452.472.481–489.504.525),<sup>28</sup> whereas a descent from Ge / Tellus, as explicitly appearing in Late Antiquity testimonies,<sup>29</sup> is in no way present in Ovid.<sup>30</sup> So, with the Peneus version (A), the author understands his narrative according to the intrinsic pattern of ὁ τρώσας καὶ ἰάσεται<sup>31</sup>—with Ge / Tellus as originator of the transformation, things run, if they run, only extrinsically.<sup>32</sup> Second, we should quasi axiomatically determine that a last invocation and deadly, if virginity-preserving, action of Ge / Tellus *without* any preparative mention of the relationship between her and Daphne in this poem is *only possible* provided that the myth of Daphne as daughter of Ge / Tellus was *not known by Ovid*. Otherwise, the missed reference and exploitation in such an extreme situation would not only be somewhat disturbing, but downright inexplicable.<sup>33</sup>

We shall come back to these two observations at the end of the article. For the moment, however, here is the third point, which concerns, as I signaled before, the rhetoric pattern of the invocation: the formulation *tellus, hisce* can't be pronounced in a vacuum, but is based on two traditional rhetorical patterns that can be easily checked on the basis of the rich, albeit somewhat disordered, material brought together by Arthur Pease 1935, 107 to Verg. *Aen.* 4.24 *sed mihi vel*

<sup>28</sup> This fact may support the assumption that actually Ovid himself made the displacement of Daphne into Thessaly (see Bömer 1969, 170).

<sup>29</sup> Compare the individual references in Emonds 1941, 200 and Bömer 1969, 144–145, 169–171 (mainly the Virgil commentator Servius, the rhetoricians Libanius, Aphthonius and the *scholia* to Statius).

<sup>30</sup> “Anrufung der Tellus nicht vorbereitet” (Blänsdorf 1980, 149) fits the fact certainly more accurately than the conciliatory “Rimane, certo, un po' inaspettata” (Galasso 2006, 111).

<sup>31</sup> A relationship that pseudo-Lactantius understood rightly (*ut virginitati suae, quam sibi permiserat, ferret auxilium*). It seems to me that Blänsdorf 1980, 150 discovers an Ovidian “Motivationslücke” just to ascribe its filling to an “Erweiterung” by Lactantius. 486 “*da mihi perpetua, genitor carissime,*” *dixit*, / “*virginitate frui*” is surely dramatic irony.

<sup>32</sup> So, then, various extrinsic reasons were cited (e. g. “Daphnes Hilferuf, Tellus möge sie verschlingen, steht im Einklang mit der Sage...Verwandlung in einen Baum paßt sachlich gesehen...besser zur Erdgöttin” [Blänsdorf 1980, 149]) or even a *formerly* existant intrinsic reason postulated ([B] as the “letzter spärlicher Zeuge” of a “ursprünglichen Textgestalt der Daphnesage” in Ovid [Emonds 1941, 209]), a reasoning which again contradicts the *status quaestionis*. See also below n. 45.

<sup>33</sup> In this direction see Magnus' polemics 1905, 207–208; Blänsdorf 1980, 148 “wir haben vom mythischen Motiv aus betrachtet keinen Anlaß, hierin den Hinweis zu vermissen, daß Tellus die Mutter der Daphne ist” might be formulated somewhat more narrowly: Ge / Tellus as mother to Daphne and lack of mention by Ovid are mutually exclusive.

*tellus optem prius ima dehiscat*.<sup>34</sup> Common to both usages is the function of the call as a kind of *adynaton*. The call (x) is in fact used typically “als eine Art Selbstverfluchung” (1) for the argument against an action (y) that is perceived as *not conceivable*, because it would violate pride and shame most strongly and thus exceed all limits of endurable pain: “In ihr ist das kondizionale Element,” or maybe: a sort of “apotropaic” element, “konstitutiv”:<sup>35</sup> “If / before (y) occurs, rather let the earth open (x)” ~ (x) will certainly not happen, and so neither will / might not (y); or (2) *after the unimaginable factual* admission of such an act: “(y) has already occurred or is occurring just now: so even (x) might happen.” Pattern (1) of course originates with the words of Agamemnon Hom. *Il.* 4.182 ὥς ποτέ τις ἐρέει · τότε μοι χάνοι εὐρεῖα χθών or of Diomedes *ibid.* 8.150 ὥς ποτ’ ἀπειλήσει (Hector)· τότε μοι χάνοι εὐρεῖα χθών. The same usage is present, for example, Hom. *Il.* 17.417 (battle for Patroclus’ body), Xen. *An.* 7.1.30 (Xenophon to the soldiers, fearing a sack of Byzantium), Verg. *Aen.* 883 (Iuturna’s lamentation in the face of the imminent death of her brother Turnus), Ov. *Her.* 3.63 (Briseis to Achilles: He just must not leave her!), D. H. 10.29.2 (Gaius Horatius before the plebs), Sil. 6.488–489 (Regulus before the Senate), in the past (“ohne Parallele”: Habermehl 2006, 34) at Petron. 81.2 (Encolpius on the beach). There is an instructive playful handling of the topos in the epic version of the story of Laodice in Quintus of Smyrna 13.544, quite a late author, riding of course on a much older myth (cp. Lycophr. 314): the Trojan princess is determined to never let her hands touch a slave’s tool (544–547): Καὶ τότε που Πριάμοιο πολυτλήτοιο θύγατρα / Λαοδίκην ἐνέπουσιν ἐς αἰθέρα χεῖρας ὀρέξαι / εὐχομένην μακάρεσσιν ἀτειρέσιν, ὄφρα ἔ γαῖα / ἀμφιχάνη, πρὶν χεῖρα βαλεῖν ἐπὶ δούλια ἔργα. Unfortunately (?) the *adynaton* does indeed happen; she is *actually* swallowed by the earth, so being saved at least from slavery. Entirely dissimilar, in my opinion, is—if against all commentators I consulted in the course of this study—Sil. 4.329–330 *nec leti cura decori / sed fugere infixum est terraeque optantur hiatus*: the Roman soldiers do not want to be devoured by earth (and thus destroyed), but are longing for *terrae hiatus* as veritable *refugees from Hannibal*, as is shown by the immediately following parable (331–333): *sic, ubi Caucaseis tigris se protulit antris, / linquntur campi et tutas petit omne latebras / turbatum insano vultu pecus*.<sup>36</sup> This target of a safe hiding place is not the case with our Daphne: she, according to the Tellus version (B), prays to escape her defloration at all costs—even that of her own personal survival—

<sup>34</sup> Otto 1890, 345 and others provide, in their relevant lists, quite different types, too.

<sup>35</sup> I have used in my formulation that of Blänsdorf 1980, 148.

<sup>36</sup> Cp. Verg. *Aen.* 12.892–893 (Aeneas to Turnus) *opta ardua pennis / astra sequi clausum-que cava te condere terra*, where the same sense is present, in hyperbole of course.

either by the extinction of her entire person,<sup>37</sup> or by the destruction of her “bella figura.”<sup>38</sup>

From the adynaton “might the earth open and swallow me” there must be clearly distinguished (a) the unrealistic desire to have died (“in the normal way,” indeed) before having experienced a specific, factual suffering and (b) the desire rather to die (and to be buried) than experience a specific, anticipated horrible event. Type (a): Aesch. *Agam.* 1538–1540 *ἰὼ γὰ γᾶ, εἴθε μ' ἐδέξω, πρὶν τόνδ' ἐσιδεῖν ἀργυροτοίχου / δροίτης κατέχοντα χαμεύναν* or [Aesch.] *Prom.* 152–159 *εἰ γάρ μ' ὑπὸ γῆν / νέρθεν θ' Αἰδου ... / εἰς ἀπέραντον Τάρτατον ἦκεν* (Zeus), / ... / ὥς μήτε θεὸς μήτε τις ἄλλος τοῖσδ' ἐπεγάρθῃ / νῦν δ' ...; Typ (b): Hom. *Il.* 6.464–465 (Hektor to Andromache) *ἀλλὰ με τεθνηῶτα χυτὴ κατὰ γαῖα καλύπτοι, / πρὶν γέ τι σῆς τε βοῆς σοῦ θ' ἐλκηθμοῖο πυθέσθαι*.<sup>39</sup>

Before and after others it was Bömer 1969, 170 who reduced the Tellus version (B) to topos (1), a proposal which Blänsdorf 1980, 148 n. 16 rightly rejected.<sup>40</sup> That the earth, alongside the typical adynaton (self-opening), would have been asked for an *alternative action* already shows that this is not the standard type (1) here. But, once the impossibility of pattern (1) of the Tellus call (B) is acknowledged, the earth is not yet, in a sense, rhetorically released into freedom. For pattern (2) is invariably used *post factum*, expressing that an accomplished (or at least already present) action is so bad or shameful, so incomprehensible, that, given this fact, the adynaton might even be expected to happen. Turning back to Daphne, this means that pattern (2) would only come *after* being touched by the god. There are a mass of examples *apud* Pease (l. c., as I said, unfortunately mixed up with type (1) and heterogeneous material), verses of the choir after the killing of Agamemnon and the *ekkyklema* in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* 1538, Soph. *Trach.* 1085 (Heracles in pain), Eur. *Suppl.*

<sup>37</sup> This train of the story is old: see Phylarchus (3rd century BC) FGrHist 81 F 32a, 4 *ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἀπαλλαγῆναι* (Bömer 1969, 144); the reaction of Daphne is exactly in the spirit of Narcissus: Met. 3, 391 *ante, ait, emoriar, quam sit tibi copia nostra*.

<sup>38</sup> Met. 1.545 *perde* thus implicitly is to understand *apo koinou* (i. e. perseverating mentally from *Tellus, hisce*) and to *vel* belongs a “qualifying clause” added in thought (cf. OLD s. v. 3b), see for example Caes. BG 4.16.5 *magnopere orabant, ut sibi auxilium ferret...vel, si id facere...prohiberetur, exercitum modo Rhenum transportaret*; the thought is: “Now swallow me, Earth, (and destroy me completely), or any rate destroy my form.” For Ovid using the *vel*-schema cp. Galasso 2006, 111.

<sup>39</sup> Different again is [Aesch.] *Prom.* 1050–1052. Here the opening of Tartarus is only another example in the chain of threats by Zeus, readily available penalties for the prince of heaven, of course. Nor does the topos belong here trag. ad. 513, 1 Sn. – K. (Suet. Ner. 38, 1) *ἐμοῦ θανόντος γαῖα μυχθήτω πυρί* (more places in Häussler 1968, 184).

<sup>40</sup> “Von dieser festen Ausdrucksform unterscheidet sich unsere Stelle.” Unfortunately Blänsdorf doesn't explicate the kind of use actually met here.

829 (Adrastus at the sight of the slain), Plaut. (Menander) *Bacch.* 149 (The *paedagogus* Lydus, given the “disobedience” of Pistoclerus), Verg. *Aen.* 10.675 (Turnus, misled by the *eidolon*), Ov. *Her.* 6.144 (as an idea: Jason’s shame before Hypsipyle), Ov. *Fast.* 3.609 (Anna sees Aeneas).<sup>41</sup>

This somewhat tedious path through so many examples is needed to make it perfectly clear: the Tellus version (B) corresponds with none of the rhetorical equivalents that are offered by such a rich tradition; Magnus’ tedious grant, “Es sei. Jedes Mädchen konnte in dieser Situation die Worte *Tellus* bis *figuram* ausrufen”<sup>42</sup> thus rightfully justified its reluctance! The invocation of Tellus by Daphne in Met. 1.544 does not function as the typical *adynaton*, as is widely interpreted (as I said, differently by Blänsdorf, see n. 39). She delivers a *real plea for help* (cf. 548 *vix prece finita*).

Now Ovid notoriously was the most sophisticated rhetorically of all Augustan authors, a man who loved to *in versus suos transferre* the *topoi* of gifted orators (cp. Sen. *Contr.* 2.2.8). So that when a significant difference from the solid rhetorical *formula* exists in our *locus*—and this clearly is the case, as we have seen before!—a sufficient motive for it must be demanded by us philologists. And sufficient motive in our context could be *solely* Ge / Tellus being the mother of Daphne. Exactly and only in this case does the turn to Tellus *outside the adynata* make sense.<sup>43</sup> From this *formal* basis—more than from other, more general reasons<sup>44</sup>—follows necessarily that the Tellus version (B) *presupposes the motherhood of Ge / Tellus*. At this point, however, we arrive again at the above given observations. There, we had (objectively) determined that (1) the Ovidian Daphne narrative does not affect Ge / Tellus as mother of Daphne, and (2) (largely intersubjectively) that the Tellus version (B) in the Ovidian context is therefore only possible if it *does not presuppose* the corresponding genealogy.<sup>45</sup> By this contradiction the forger is found guilty: the Tellus version (B) in its

<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, Sen. *Phaedr.* 1238 (sight of Hippolytus), *Troad.* 519 (sight of Odysseus), *HF* 1225 (sight of the slain children), *Thyest.* 1006 (sight of Atreus), *carmen latinum* fr. inc. 52 Blänsdorf (unclear), Lucian *Conv.* [17] 28 (Lycinus during the presentation of the βιβλίον of Hetoimokles). *Pisc.* [28] 38 (Aletheia hearing the speech of Parrhesiades). *Adv. indoct.* [31] 18 (The pretender, asked about the contents of his book), Apollod. 3, 2, 2 (Althaimenes after the accidental killing of his father Catreus), Theodoret. *Hist. Eccl.* 1, 30, 4 (The accusers of Athanasius, when Arsenius is discovered undamaged).

<sup>42</sup> Magnus 1905, 207.

<sup>43</sup> Analogous to some degree is Sen. *Oct.* 134–135 *emergere umbris et fer auxilium tuae / natae invocanti, genitor, aut Stygios sinus / tellure rapta pande, quo praeceps ferar*.

<sup>44</sup> Cp. particularly Murgia 1984, 225, and see also the parallel story of Syrinx, Met. 1.704 (invocation of the sisters).

<sup>45</sup> Magnus 1905, 207; Mendner 1939, 21, Dursteler 1940, 10; Bömer 1969, 170; Blänsdorf 1980, 148, *implicitly* Murgia 1984, Zwierlein 1999, 244 A. 3; Emonds 1941, 203–204 is

rhetorical and conceptual structure is based on a mythological fact not presupposed by the epic author: It cannot come from Ovid.<sup>46</sup>

### References

- Anderson, W. S. (1982) (ed.), *P. Ovidii Nasonis Metamorphoses*. Leipzig: Teubner.
- Bernbeck, E. J. (1967), *Beobachtungen zur Darstellungsart in Ovids Metamorphosen*. München: Beck (Zetemata 43).
- Blänsdorf, J. (1980), "Entstehung und Kontamination der Doppelfassung Ovids met. 1, 544–547a," *RhM* 123: 138–151.
- Bömer, F. (1969), *P. Ovidius Naso, Metamorphosen. Kommentar, Buch 1–3*. Heidelberg: C. Winter.
- Dursteler, K. (1940), *Die Doppelfassungen in Ovids Metamorphosen*. Diss. Hamburg.
- Emonds, H. (1941), *Zweite Auflage im Altertum. Kulturgeschichtliche Studie zur Überlieferung der antiken Literatur*. Leipzig: O. Harrassowitz.
- Galasso, L. (2006), "L'edizione di Richard Tarrant delle Metamorfosi di Ovidio. Una discussione," *M&D* 57: 105–136.
- Habermehl, P. (2006), *Petronius, Satyricon 79–141. Ein philologisch-literarischer Kommentar, Bd. 1: Sat. 79–110*. Berlin and New York: de Gruyter.
- Häussler, R. (1968) (ed.), *Nachträge zu A. Otto, Sprichwörter und sprichwörtliche Redensarten der Römer. Eingeleitet und mit einem Register*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- Ludwig, W. (1965), *Struktur und Einheit der Metamorphosen Ovids*. Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Magistrale, F. (1968), "L'Ovidio napoletano. Il libro e il testo," in Cavallo G., Fedeli, P., Papponetti, G. (edd.), *L'Ovidio napoletano*. Sulmona: Centro Ovidiano di Studi e Ricerche, 41–101.
- Magnus, H. (1905), "Ovids Metamorphosen in doppelter Fassung?" *Hermes* 40: 191–239.
- Mendner, S. (1939), *Der Text der Metamorphosen Ovids*. Diss. Cologne.
- Murgia, C. E. (1984), "Ovid Met. 1, 544–547 and the Theory of Double Recension," *CIA* 3: 207–235.
- Otto, A. (1890), *Die Sprichwörter und sprichwörtlichen Redensarten der Römer. Gesammelt und erklärt*. Leipzig: Teubner.
- Pease, A. S. (1935) (ed.), *Publi Vergili Maronis Aeneidos liber quartus*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Pfeiffer, R. (1934), "Goethe und der griechische Geist," in Bühler, W. (ed.), *Rudolf Pfeiffer, Ausgewählte Schriften. Aufsätze und Vorträge zur griechischen Dichtung und zum Humanismus*, München: Beck [1960], 235–255.
- Prete, S. (1987) (ed.), *Pagine amare di storia della filologia classica. Dalla corrispondenza di Edoardo Fraenkel con Günther Jachmann*. Sassoferato: Istituto internazionale di studi piceni.

---

known to be forced into desperation to recognize in the Tellus version (B) "den zufällig erhaltenen Rest einer längeren Ausführung," where "die Bezeichnung der Tellus als Mutter der Daphne vorgekommen sein konnte." See also above n. 32.

<sup>46</sup> Thanks to Victoria Hooper, Nottingham, for critical comment while "tuning" my English.

- Reynolds, L. D. (1983) (ed.), *Texts and Transmission. A Survey of the Latin Classics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Richmond, J. (2001), "Manuscript Tradition and the Transmission of Ovid's Works," in Boyd, B. W. (ed.), *Brill's Companion to Ovid*. Leiden and New York: Brill, 443–483.
- Ritschl, Fr. (1842), Zu Ovidius, in Friedrich Ritschl's kleine philologische Schriften, vol. 3: Zur römischen Litteratur, Leipzig [1877]: 801–2.
- Slater, D. A. (1919), "Harley Ms. 2610, and Ovid, met. 1, 544–546," *CR* 33: 140–141.
- Tarrant, R. J. (1982), "Editing Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: Problems and Possibilities," *CPh* 77: 342–360.
- Tarrant, R. J. (2004) (ed.), P. Ovidi Nasonis *Metamorphoses*, *rec. brevisque adn. crit. instr.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Zwierlein, O. (1999), *Die Ovid- und Vergil-Revision in tiberischer Zeit, Bd. 1: Prolegomena*. Berlin and New York: de Gruyter.





# Comparative Approaches to the *Historia Augusta*

MICHAEL MECKLER  
The Ohio State University

Our fascination with pseudepigraphic texts naturally rests with the deception fostered by their creation and dissemination. Once we have ascertained that the purported author could not have written the text in question, our attention immediately turns to the detective work of trying to figure out who actually wrote the text, and who, if it is not the same person, promoted the text as a genuine work of its purported author.

The types of questions we ask about a pseudepigraphic text tend to center on the intentions of the person or persons who perpetrated the deception. Why did they create this text, or manipulate it to deceive potential readers? What did the deceiver hope to gain by the deception?

These sorts of questions are not particularly easy to answer when dealing with pseudepigraphic texts from classical antiquity, because we do not know, nor can we ascertain the precise identity of the actual authors.<sup>1</sup> Nonetheless, we generally can answer questions about the purpose of the deception because, in most cases, the deception involves chronologically later texts that have been ascribed to well-known personages from the past.

For example, the gathering of the texts that formed the Hippocratic corpus may have been a haphazard exercise of the Library of Alexandria in the third century BC, a combination of anonymous medical treatises seized by Ptolemaic authorities, deliberate forgeries sold to the library, propaganda from the island of Cos that allowed the Coans to connect themselves to the legendary fifth-century BC physician, and perhaps a few genuine works. Whether by fraud, ignorance or reverence, the inclusion into the Hippocratic corpus of texts that could not have been written by Hippocrates served to lend the physician's authority to the information in those texts.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Syme 1972a.

<sup>2</sup> Smith 1979, 177–222; 1990, 6–11.

To cite another example, the *Oratio in Ciceronem* ascribed to Sallust appears to have been a rhetorical exercise of the Julio-Claudian era to compose a speech in the style of Sallust, a *prosopopoeia* in the form of a *controversia*.<sup>3</sup> The author so convincingly appropriated Sallustian phraseology that a generation or two later, Quintilian thought the speech was genuinely the work of Sallust.<sup>4</sup> While the deception was deliberate, the purpose here was to demonstrate the orator's skill at imitation rather than to manipulate history due to some contemporary political or social concern.

The overwhelming majority of examples of pseudepigraphic texts from antiquity are ascribed to known authors, but when the purported authors themselves are fictitious, we are left to struggle in a grimpen of uncertainty over the intentions of those involved in the text's creation and dissemination. And that is precisely the primary difficulty in trying to come to any understanding about the purpose of the work known as the *Historia Augusta*, a series of biographies of Roman emperors and usurpers that purports to be the work of six authors of the late third and early fourth centuries AD, but which nearly all scholars today believe to be the work of one author of the late fourth or early fifth century AD.<sup>5</sup>

The biographies blend the probable, the improbable and the impossible in an entertaining farrago of historiographical styles, from the cramped language of the epitome to the expansive floridity of the personal reminiscence. The admixture of fact and fiction makes the *Historia Augusta* a tricky text for historians, who must out of necessity engage the most complete historical source for the second and third centuries AD. Its literary purpose remains equally enigmatic.

Is the *Historia Augusta* a vast, literary joke never taken seriously by its original audience, an obvious pastiche perpetrated by, as Sir Ronald Syme characterized him, "a professor on the loose"?<sup>6</sup> Or was the work's fraudulent nature necessary to veil a serious critique of Theodosian-era governance and religious policy?<sup>7</sup> Or are there other reasons for the creation of this work that have escaped notice?

Much of the vast scholarship generated on the *Historia Augusta* during the last half century has been connected, in one way or another, with the *Historia Augusta Colloquium*—based originally in Bonn under the aegis of Johannes

<sup>3</sup> Novokhatko 2009, 3–20, 111–114.

<sup>4</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* 4.1.68; 9.3.89.

<sup>5</sup> An excellent starting point for studying the *Historia Augusta* remains the bilingual Latin-French edition prepared by Chastagnol (1994) for the Bouquins series. References to passages in the *Historia Augusta* will start with the abbreviation *HA* followed by the name of the individual biography and the relevant chapter and section as given by Chastagnol.

<sup>6</sup> Syme 1983, 221; 1968, 198.

<sup>7</sup> E.g., Straub 1963; Johnes 1976.

Straub, and since 1990, hosted by a variety of European universities.<sup>8</sup> The colloquists—including this author—have overwhelmingly been historians by training and temperament. Source criticism has been the foundation of much of their work, and important insights have been gained into the formation and trustworthiness of the biographies by the minute inquisitiveness of *Quellenforschung*. Literary approaches—particularly those of a comparative bent that would find connections with more recent literature—have understandably been rare.<sup>9</sup>

Yet study of the *Historia Augusta*, arguably the most creative Latin text from late antiquity, would benefit greatly from the questions and concerns of literary scholars.<sup>10</sup> The purpose of my paper is to encourage the literary-minded to take a fresh look at this text by discussing three comparative approaches connecting the *Historia Augusta* to more recent and familiar works of literature and literary theory. By no means are the approaches discussed meant to be definitive or comprehensive. I have tried to maintain a light hand to open readers to wider possibilities of interpretation and understanding that may point to underlying features of this fascinating text, even if such interpretations may not always be strictly relevant to the *Historia Augusta*'s late-antique context.

More than one scholar has made a connection between the *Historia Augusta*'s plenitude of manufactured details and the famous 1968 essay by literary critic Roland Barthes on the "reality effect."<sup>11</sup> Barthes was trying to explain the purpose of "useless detail" in the writings of Gustave Flaubert and other 19th-century French Realist authors. The mention of a barometer in the drawing room of Madame Aubain in Flaubert's 1877 short story *Un coeur simple* appears to have no narrative purpose whatsoever. The barometer cannot even be understood as a marker of social class. So why did Flaubert include this detail in his story?

Barthes concluded that Madame Aubain's barometer and other seemingly useless details in Realist fiction were included to foster a "you-are-there" sense

---

<sup>8</sup> The proceedings of the Bonn colloquia, along with an extensive monograph series, were published by R. Habelt Verlag, Bonn, from 1964–1989; the proceedings of the 1990 colloquium have been published by the University of Macerata; the proceedings of subsequent colloquia have been published by Edipuglia, Bari.

<sup>9</sup> Shortly after his retirement from the University of Geneva, François Paschoud, a mainstay of the *Historia Augusta* Colloquium, published, through a vanity press, a novel set in late antiquity, *Le dernier païen* (Nice: Bénévent, 2008).

<sup>10</sup> Caerols (2011) prepared an examination of the language of falsification and forgery in the *Historia Augusta* which appeared in an earlier volume of the papers from the Falsificaciones y Falsificadores de Textos Antiguos project.

<sup>11</sup> Fry 2010, 144; Meckler 1994, 51.

among readers, tightening the connection between the readers' own experiences and the fictional story, thus making the story more "real."

In the *Historia Augusta*, these details may have a similar purpose, deceiving readers into accepting the historical validity of both individual episodes in the various biographies, and in the collection as a whole. We are told, for example, that Alpine cheese was consumed by Antoninus Pius at his final meal;<sup>12</sup> that four kinds of marble were used in the colonnades of the villa of the Gordians on the Via Praenestina;<sup>13</sup> and that a grandson of the emperor Aurelian was still alive, resident in Sicily.<sup>14</sup> The *Historia Augusta* is chock-a-block with such seemingly irrelevant details.

Barthes contrasted the "reality effect" he noticed in 19th-century literature with the ancient literary concept of verisimilitude. In Barthes' view, verisimilitude was a social construct that operated independently of historical validity. Even in antiquity, observers could be troubled by the preference shown by some historians for what was expected to have occurred, over what actually occurred. In the second century AD, the satirist Lucian, in his essay *How to Write History* (*Πῶς δεῖ ἱστορίαν συγγράφειν*), criticized how verisimilitude was used by authors to create history where no reality existed. Nonetheless, in the hierarchy of historical truth as governed by the classical theory of verisimilitude, an event that was unsubstantiated but seemed probable was more "truthful" than a substantiated but improbable fact.<sup>15</sup>

Despite the plenitude of irrelevant details littering the *Historia Augusta*, the author's manipulation of Barthes' "reality effect" by no means signaled a dismissal of the ancient concept of verisimilitude. For example, the emperor Caracalla is reported to have made a speech before a meeting of the Senate justifying the murder of his brother, Geta.<sup>16</sup> A fragment from the *Excerpta Vaticana* believed to be based on the Roman history of the contemporary senator Cassius Dio—who likely was present at that very meeting—states that Caracalla spoke little that day because of a sore throat. Yet the Romans' rhetoric-based education fed an expectation that an emperor who had his own brother killed should make a speech trying to justify what might generally be reckoned unjustifiable. Another contemporary historian, Herodian, gives a far more elaborate description of this purported speech by Caracalla, even though the emperor may not have

<sup>12</sup> HA, *Antoninus Pius* 12.4.

<sup>13</sup> HA, *Gordiani Tres* 32.2.

<sup>14</sup> HA, *Aurelius* 42.2.

<sup>15</sup> Fry 2010, 140.

<sup>16</sup> HA, *Caracallus* 2.9–11.

uttered any detailed justification for the murder during this meeting of the Senate.<sup>17</sup>

If we accept Barthes' contrast between ancient verisimilitude and a modern verisimilitude epitomized by the "reality effect," we must then note that the *Historia Augusta* employs both techniques, and in this regard, ancient biographies may well bear a strong connection to modern biographies. Today's readers expect biographies to reveal their subjects' psychological motivation, providing a pat explanation for the achievements that brought the individual fame or infamy. When external evidence for that inner motivation is not readily discernable, modern biographers often employ literary techniques to insert probable-sounding fictional details into their subjects' lives to feed their readers' expectations.

The most egregious recent example of such wholesale manufacturing of detail—serving both to enhance the "reality effect" and to fulfill readers' expectations—was Edmund Morris' authorized biography of Ronald Reagan, *Dutch*, published in 1999. Morris notoriously inserted fictional characters into Reagan's life, justifying the fabrications by claiming this enabled readers to comprehend Reagan's essential nature.<sup>18</sup> But Morris has not been alone. Authors writing about the lives of Bill and Hillary Clinton, and about Ted Kennedy, have also included fictionalized episodes that call to mind the classical theory of verisimilitude.<sup>19</sup> Not entirely dissimilar are the common narrative ploys by today's biographers of describing the internal thoughts of their subjects and of imbuing physical objects with psychological significance. Analyses of the techniques of modern biographical writing may provide intriguing comparisons for the study of the *Historia Augusta*.

Another structural approach of comparative literature examines how texts with any fictional component—which would certainly include pseudepigraphic texts—relate to our own experiences of real-life. The Danish literary scholar Jørgen Dines Johansen has defined four such points of relativity between fictional and experiential universes: continuity, similarity, conventionality, and figurative structuration.<sup>20</sup>

*Continuity* refers to the insertion of fictional information within a non-fictional context. Johansen's example is the description of the fictional town of Yonville-l'Abbaye in Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*. Flaubert places the town within a specific geographic locale, using the names of actual roads, rivers

<sup>17</sup> Meckler 1994, 119.

<sup>18</sup> Carvajal 1999; cf. Morris 2007.

<sup>19</sup> Meckler 1996, 374.

<sup>20</sup> Johansen 1998.

and other locations in Normandy to provide credible references for his fictional town.

Johansen defines *similarity* primarily in terms of literary style and mode of representation, citing Henrik Ibsen's use of pedestrian prose to provide a sense of realism for his dramas.

*Conventionality* means that the "laws, habits, and norms valid in a non-fictional world ... are transferred to the fictional universe."

The term *figurative structuration* involves metaphors of real-life experience that are employed in ways that lead to an allegorical interpretation of the fictional events described, even though the events themselves are not realistic. Johansen refers to Franz Kafka's *The Trial* as an example of this point of relativity between fiction and real-world experience.

Examples of these points of relativity between fiction and reality may be readily found throughout the *Historia Augusta*. A precise location in the Roman Forum—in *pede Montis Romulei, hoc est ante Sacram Viam, inter Templum Faustinae ac Vestam ad Arcum Fabianum*—is provided for a fictional statue of the emperor Gallienus' son Saloninus.<sup>21</sup> The ritual language of imperial acclamations is employed for a fictional exchange between the Senate and the emperor Severus Alexander concerning the emperor's refusal to assume the name Antoninus.<sup>22</sup> A carriage ride through the city of Rome during the *Hilaria* festival is the occasion for a conversation between a real urban prefect and a fictional author.<sup>23</sup>

Using a structuralist approach such as Johansen's to interpret the *Historia Augusta* requires the premise that the work was intended to be understood as fiction, analogous to the modern fictional genres of alternate history and secret history, and with a complex narrative structure that rivals the novels of Vladimir Nabokov and Thomas Pynchon. One might complain that such an approach anachronistically fashions the *Historia Augusta* into precisely the sort of self-reflexive, postmodern text that contemporary literary critics are most engaged by, but this may not necessarily be an incorrect view.

The *Historia Augusta* is nothing if not self-reflexive, and the author regularly refers backwards and forwards through the text, so much so that scholarly discussions on the order of composition of the individual lives are tortuous to follow.<sup>24</sup> One prominent example of this self-reflexivity—here concerning the pseudepigraphic names attached to the individual biographies—has the fictive

<sup>21</sup> *HA, Gallieni Duo* 19.4.

<sup>22</sup> *HA, Alexander Severus* 6.1–12.1.

<sup>23</sup> *HA, Aurelianus* 1–2; cf. Den Hengst 1981, 94–110.

<sup>24</sup> E.g., Syme 1972b; Thompson 2012, 89–102.

author Flavius Vopiscus defending the biographies of the fictive authors Julius Capitolinus, Aelius Lampridius and Trebellius Pollio.<sup>25</sup> Syme described the author of the *Historia Augusta* as “a master of historical romance.”<sup>26</sup> More recently, Jean-Pierre Callu and Michel Festy described the *Historia Augusta* as “alternate history,” comparing the work to another late Roman blending of history and fiction, the versions of the Alexander Romance.<sup>27</sup>

Furthermore, accepting the premise that the *Historia Augusta* was intended as a clever exercise in erudition meant for recreational reading does not preclude the text addressing serious political, religious, and social issues. Alternate or secret histories are not necessarily escapist literature, so the political, religious and social messages we find throughout the *Historia Augusta* would neither diminish the text’s status as fiction, nor would the work’s fictional nature diminish the seriousness of these messages.

A third approach to interpreting the *Historia Augusta* treats the text as an example of the literature of dissent. What constitutes dissent literature often remains ill-defined beyond noting that the authors of such works faced the possibility of punishment as political opponents of an authoritarian regime. The defining nexus of dissent literature are the texts of eastern European—especially Russian—authors during the existence and dominance of the Soviet Union in the mid-20th century.

Although literary theory has remained light in defining dissent literature, its general contours can be described. These texts are often anonymous or pseudonymous. The language can be cryptic, sometimes employing neologisms, to provide nuance concerning topics or themes that may be too sensitive to discuss directly. Often the writing is intended for narrow distribution among a small circle of acquaintances whose shared personal knowledge and experiences provide the proper interpretative context for a work that, on its face, seems simple and innocuous. Sometimes the writing is meant for the desk drawer, to be rescued and revealed years or decades later when the political climate changes. And history is frequently appropriated as a theme, placing an often mythologized past in contrast with the dismal conditions of the present.<sup>28</sup>

One of the most salient examinations of the literature of dissent happens to concern the period of the Roman principate and was formulated by the ancient historian Vasily Rudich, who himself experienced harassment as a dissident in

<sup>25</sup> *HA*, *Aurelianus* 2.1; *Probus* 3.7; *Quadrige Tyrannorum* 1.3; Syme 1968, 99–100; Den Hengst 1981, 135–136.

<sup>26</sup> Syme 1968, 205.

<sup>27</sup> Callu and Festy 2001, esp. 129–133.

<sup>28</sup> Although the work dealt only with political texts, Feldbrugge (1975) described how dissident texts were created and disseminated during the Soviet period.

the Soviet Union. Rudich identified two elements in dissent literature during the Roman empire: *animus nocendi*, “the intent to do harm”; and *interpretatio prava*, “prejudiced interpretation.”<sup>29</sup> Both elements are centered on discerning an author’s intent, but from different perspectives. An author revealed *animus nocendi* by explicitly providing an interpretation of his work that directly criticized the emperor or his family. For example, Maternus, at the beginning of Tacitus’ *Dialogus de Oratoribus*, indicates that his plays *Cato* and *Thyestes* are meant to be understood as political criticism.<sup>30</sup>

*Interpretatio prava*—Rudich took the term directly from a statement in Tacitus’ *Dialogus*—was imposed upon a work of literature by a reader who asserted that a text was a veiled attempt to attack the regime. Even if an author insisted that he did not have *animus nocendi* in writing his work, a powerful reader who took offense might successfully argue that the text should be classified as a form of dissent liable to punishment.

Roman jurists saw intent as a necessary component of a successful prosecution for *maiestas*—treason—under the *Lex Julia de maiestate* promulgated by the emperor Augustus in 8 BC. The law seems to have explicitly required that the defendant acted with malicious intent—*dolo malo*—and already under Augustus the crime was extended beyond activities related to warfare and civil strife to include verbal criticism of the emperor.<sup>31</sup> Any criticism of the emperor could potentially generate a *maiestas* charge, although punishment was discouraged for a slip of the tongue if evidence of foresight was lacking.<sup>32</sup>

A law of the dictator Sulla from 81 BC dealing with the humiliation brought on from a physical assault or a home invasion (*Lex Cornelia de iniuriis*) was extended in the early principate to include literary works that were deemed insulting, including anonymous and pseudepigraphic writings. Anyone involved in the publication and dissemination of such works could be held liable.<sup>33</sup> Under both laws, informants were encouraged to step forward, including slaves, and the *maiestas* law even accepted the testimony of women and those who were prohibited from providing evidence in other cases.<sup>34</sup> Those found guilty of *iniuria* under the *Lex Cornelia* were fined, while those convicted of *maiestas* faced exile or death.

The criminalization of dissent during the principate imbued literary works whose content could even remotely be reckoned political with a combination of

<sup>29</sup> Rudich 1997, 10–16; cf. MacMullen 1966, 36–45.

<sup>30</sup> Tacitus, *Dialogus de Oratoribus* 2–3.

<sup>31</sup> *Digesta* (henceforth, *D*) 48.4.1; Tacitus, *Annales* 1.72–73.

<sup>32</sup> *D* 48.4.7.3.

<sup>33</sup> *D* 47.10.9–10; cf. Suetonius, *Augustus* 51.1, 55.1.

<sup>34</sup> *D* 47.10.11; 48.4.7.pr.–2; 48.4.8.



paranoia and self-censorship, recalling Joseph Brodsky's comment that the dream of tyranny is to make every individual his own bureaucrat.<sup>35</sup> But Rudich recognized an important contrast between modern dissent and ancient dissent.

Rudich pointed out that under the principate, the Romans did not bureaucratize censorship, whose "main characteristic was total arbitrariness and unpredictability."<sup>36</sup> The modern totalitarian state's establishment of official machinery for censorship meant that rules had to be established, providing the dissident with guidelines on themes and vocabulary to be avoided. No such guidelines existed on which the ancient Roman author could rely. A theme acceptable under one emperor might cause an author's death under another.

Rudich's understanding of dissent literature fits nicely within reader-response literary theory, in which a text's meaning is completed by a reader or group of readers.<sup>37</sup> The literature of dissent involves the interplay of text and interpretation, just as dissent itself involves the interplay of the individual and the collective, and the competing claims of freedom and order.

The theme of how authorities attempt to control history is well represented in the *Historia Augusta*. Frequently the author, in various guises, complains about the difficulty in finding information about those whose bids for power were short-lived. Writers distort and suppress information.<sup>38</sup> The economical Suetonius might be forgiven for not writing separate biographies of the first century AD usurpers Julius Vindex and Antonius Saturninus, but the failure of the loquacious Marius Maximus to provide biographies for the second century AD usurpers Avidius Cassius, Clodius Albinus and Pescennius Niger must have been a deliberate choice.<sup>39</sup>

The *Historia Augusta* is well aware that history is written by the winners. Even bad emperors have little trouble finding authors to glorify them. The emperor Gallienus had a champion in the fictive author Annius Cornicula.<sup>40</sup> So eager was he to control history, that the emperor Hadrian wrote a biography of his own life that was published under the name of his freedman Phlegon. The emperor who leads 30 legions, like the modern president who can order missile launches and drone attacks, is always the smartest man in the room.<sup>41</sup> And an

<sup>35</sup> Brodsky 1987, 121.

<sup>36</sup> Rudich 1997, 13.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Fish 1976.

<sup>38</sup> *HA, Pescennius Niger* 1.1–2.

<sup>39</sup> *HA, Quadrigae Tyrannorum* 1.1–2.

<sup>40</sup> *HA, Gallieni Duo* 17.2.

<sup>41</sup> *HA, Hadrianus* 15.12–16.1.

emperor's defeated opponents are regularly labeled *latrones*, a term which, in the 21st century, might best be translated into English as "terrorists."<sup>42</sup>

In both style and substance, the *Historia Augusta* appears uncannily fresh and current, and connections may readily be found to the concerns literary and otherwise prevalent in our own day. I hope that this brief essay awakens literary scholars to the rich, comparative possibilities to be found in the study of this fascinating, pseudepigraphic text from late antiquity.

### References

- Barthes, Roland. (1968), "L'effet de réel," *Communications* 11: 84–89. Rpt. in Genette and Todorov. 81–90
- Brodsky, Joseph. (1987), *Less Than One: Selected Essays*. London: Penguin.
- Caerols, José J. (2011), "Embusteros, fingidores y falsarios en la *Historia Augusta*," in *Fakes and Forgers of Classical Literature*. Ed. Javier Martínez. Madrid: Ediciones Clásicas, 86–96.
- Callu, Jean-Pierre and Michel Festy. (2010), "Alternatives historiennes: de l'*Historia Alexandri* à l'*Historia Augusta*," in Galli Milić and Hequet-Noti. 117–133.
- Carvajal, Doreen. (1999), "Editor of the Reagan Book Overcame Qualms," *The New York Times* 5 Oct. A1.
- Chastagnol, André. (1994), *Histoire Auguste: Les empereurs romains des IIe et IIIe siècles*. Paris: Robert Laffont.
- Den Hengst, Daniël. (1981), *The Prefaces in the Historia Augusta*. Amsterdam: B. R. Grüner.
- Feldbrugge, F.J.M. (1975), *Samizdat and political dissent in the Soviet Union*. Leiden: A.W. Sijthoff.
- Fish, Stanley E. (1976), "Interpreting the Variorum," *Critical Inquiry* 2:465–485.
- Fry, Carole. (2010), "Suetonius quidam: l'auteur de l'*Histoire Auguste* en utilisateur du style suétonien," in Galli Milić and Hecquet-Noti. 135–151.
- Galli Milić, Lavinia and Nicole Hecquet-Noti. (2010) (eds), *Historiae Augustae Colloquium Genevense*. Bari: Edipuglia.
- Genette, Gérard and Tzvetan Todorov. (1982) (eds), *Littérature et réalité*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1982.
- Johansen, Jørgen Dines. (1998), "A semiotic mapping of the study of literature," *Sign Systems Studies* 26: 275–295.
- Johnes, Klaus-Peter. (1976), *Kaiserbiographie und Senatsaristokratie: Untersuchungen zur Datierung und sozialen Herkunft der Historia Augusta*. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag.
- MacMullen, Ramsay. (1966), *Enemies of the Roman Order*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard.
- Meckler, Michael. (1994), *Caracalla and his late-antique biographer*. Diss. U of Michigan, 1994. Ann Arbor: UMI. 9500996.
- (1996), "The Beginning of the *Historia Augusta*," *Historia* 45: 364–375.
- Morris, Edmund. (1999), *Dutch: A Memoir of Ronald Reagan*. New York: Random House.
- (2007), "To the Editors," *The New York Review of Books*, 12 April: 83.

<sup>42</sup> HA, *Quadrigae Tyrannorum* 2.2.

- Novokhatko, Anna A. (2009), *The Invectives of Sallust and Cicero*. Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter.
- Rudich, Vasily. (1997), *Dissidence and Literature under Nero*. London: Routledge.
- Smith, Wesley D. (1979), *The Hippocratic Tradition*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- (1990), *Hippocrates, Pseudepigraphic Writings*. Studies in Ancient Medicine 2. Leiden: Brill, 6–11.
- Straub, Johannes. (1963), *Heidnische Geschichtsapologetik in der christlichen Spätantike*. Bonn: R. Habelt.
- Syme, Ronald. (1968), *Ammianus and the Historia Augusta*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- (1972a), “Fraud and Imposture.” *Pseudepigraphia I*, Fondation Hardt Entretiens 18. Geneva: Vandoeuvres, 3–17. Rpt. in *Historia Augusta Papers*. 1–11.
- (1972b), “The Composition of the *Historia Augusta*,” *Journal of Roman Studies* 62: 123–133. Rpt. in *Historia Augusta Papers*, 12–29.
- (1983), *Historia Augusta Papers*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Thompson, Mark. (2012), *Studies in the Historia Augusta*. Collection Latomus 337. Brussels: Latomus.



# V

## Late Antique Works



# Truth in the Details: *The Report of Pilate to Tiberius as an Authentic Forgery*

ANNE-CATHERINE BAUDOIN  
École normale supérieure (Paris)

Pontius Pilate, the fifth Roman prefect of Judea, holding the office between 26 and 36 A.D., is mostly known for the part he played in the sentencing to death of Jesus of Nazareth. His being part of the Roman administrative and military power, together with his non-Jewish origin and the mention of his governorship under Tiberius in the Gospel of Luke (3.1), may explain the presence of his name in Christian confessions of faith up to our days: Jesus Christ is said to have “suffered under Pontius Pilate.” The preposition used here—in English (*under*) as well as in Greek (ἐπί) and in Latin (*sub*)—seems to serve as an indication of time: the name is used to link the event that took place in Jerusalem to a wider world and period—the Roman Empire. As such, Pilate’s name works as a guarantee of authenticity. This use first appears in the canonical Gospels and in one of Paulinian letters (1 Tim. 6.13); it is taken over by second-century writers, such as Ignatius of Antioch (*Trall.* 9.2; *Smyrn.* 1.2; *Magn.* 11.1), Irenaeus of Lyon (e.g., *Adv. Haer.* 3.4.2; 4.23.2; *Dem.* 74; 77), and Justin of Neapolis and Tertullian, on whom I would now like to focus. Indeed, both Justin and his keen reader, Tertullian, allude to a document put out under Pilate’s authorship: Justin mentions “acts recorded under Pontius Pilate” (1<sup>st</sup> *Apol.* ch. 35; cf. ch. 48) that his readers may consult, and Tertullian claims that Pilate announced to Tiberius the events happening in Judea (*Apol.* ch. 21 par. 24; cf. ch. 5 par. 2). Those testimonies echo two canonical characteristics of Pilate: he is a citizen of Rome and he is a governor (ἡγεμών, cf. e.g., Matt. 27.2); he is thus the most suitable person to represent a link between Judea and Rome. In the Gospel of John (19.19–22), he is said to have written the tablet placed over the cross (*titulus*), which makes him one of the few characters in the Gospels who engaged in the process of writing. Moreover, among the Jewish testimonies about Pilate are

mentioned a letter sent by four princes of Judea to Tiberius after Pilate had refused to put down the golden shields hanged in Herod's palace (Philo, *Leg.* 303) as well as Tiberius's answer addressed to Pilate (*Leg.* 304–305). The correspondence of the governor Pliny with the emperor Trajan as an example of communication between the representatives of the Roman power also frames the plausibility of a written exchange between Pilate and the emperor.

Late antique literature in the languages of the Mediterranean basin has transmitted or alluded to numerous writings attributed to Pilate. In my thesis (ch. 18),<sup>1</sup> I offer a survey of those “Pilatus-Schriften,”<sup>2</sup> which are classified as follows: allusions to a written document sent by Pilate to the emperor, texts of such documents, and allusions to or texts about an exchange between Pilate and King Herod. The texts assigned to Pilate match most of the six distinctive categories of forgeries proposed by Antonio Guzmán Guerra in the opening of *Fakes and Forgers of Classical Literature* (26–29). This corpus of Pilate correspondence may indeed be considered a forgery (*falso*), since it was apparently produced in an attempt to deceive the reader. The frame of the documents—e.g., the *inscriptio*, the addressee, the reference to Pilate's administrative situation—allows us to view them as plagiarism (*plagio*) since they pretend to imitate the style of a Roman governor. In so far as they associate the documents with the authority of a famous person, they may be impostures (*impostura*). The corpus could also be called “spurious” (*espurio*) if some parts were introduced in a period posterior to the original versions. However, it is unlikely that those texts would be considered pseudepigraphical (*pseudepígrafo*) in the same sense as Pseudo-Longinus' *On the Sublime*—wrongly attributed to an author—since the texts themselves claim their authorship; however, taken in its common meaning—attributed to an authoritative figure of the past—the word pseudepigraphical may describe precisely the situation of those writings. On the other hand, the category of “fiction” (*ficción*) is the one that the antique writer, or forger, intends to dismiss.

Referring to these categories will allow me to offer a fresh look at one of the texts placed under the authorship of Pilate and addressed to the emperor in Rome: the *Anaphora Pilati*, or “The Report of Pilate.” I shall first briefly introduce this text and then focus on the paragraph that opens it in some manuscripts, prior to the first person narration. In a second part of the paper, I shall bring to

<sup>1</sup> Baudoin 2012.

<sup>2</sup> The creation of a German word reflects the influence of Michl, “Pilatus.” *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche* (1957–1965, vol. 8, col. 505), who speaks of “Pilatus-Schrifttum.” However I choose to use a plural form to emphasize the material multiplicity: many textual witnesses are covered by the general concept of “Pilatus-Schrifttum.”



light some pieces of information transmitted by the *Anaphora* that can help determine the milieu in which it originated.

*Transmission, edition and the title of the Anaphora Pilati*

The *Anaphora Pilati* presents Pilate's retelling of the events that just had happened under his governorship in Judea: the first part is devoted to a survey of some miracles performed by Jesus and the second to the unusual phenomena accompanying his death and his resurrection, the turning point being the very brief depiction of the trial before Pilate. There is no recent edition<sup>3</sup> of the *Anaphora Pilati*—to keep the title used by Geerard in his *Clavis Apocryphorum Novi Testamenti* (sec. 65–66)—but it has been made available in print since the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The first edition is likely to be that of Fabricius, published in 1703 and using two manuscripts (Paris, BnF, *gr.* 770 and *Codex Regis Galliae* 2431<sup>4</sup>). The second was produced by Birch, who in 1804 published two recensions of the text, one from a Vienna manuscript (ÖNB, *theol. gr.* 247) and another from the Paris copy (BnF, *gr.* 770) already used by Fabricius. Hence, he is the first scholar to bring to light the existence of two textual traditions, a point that will be discussed later. In 1832, Thilo offered an edition with a critical apparatus, based on four Paris manuscripts (BnF, *gr.* 770, *gr.* 929, *gr.* 1019, *gr.* 1331) as well as on Birch's edition of the Vienna manuscript. In 1837, back from a tour around Europe, Fleck published what he considered a "new recension" (143) of the *Anaphora* from a manuscript of Torino (BNU, c.II.5) that offered a different narrative order from those previously edited. Finally, in 1853, Tischendorf distinguished two recensions that he poetically names "A" (Geerard sec. 66) and "B" (Geerard sec. 65); he also numbered the paragraphs, emphasizing that one of the major discrepancies between both texts is the order of events in the second part of the narrative. For each of the recensions, he used five manuscripts, either reading them directly or relying on Birch, Thilo, and Fleck. To those editions one must add a short version of the *Anaphora* published by Abbott. Recension B of the *Anaphora* also exists in Slavonic, and recension A in Syriac, Arabic (both edited by Dunlop Gibson), Armenian and Slavonic. I shall focus here

<sup>3</sup> Gabriela Aragione (Univ. of Strasbourg) is currently preparing an edition of some Greek texts of the "Cycle of Pilate" for Brepols' *Corpus Christianorum Ser. Apocryphorum*, among which the *Anaphora Pilati*.

<sup>4</sup> = Paris, BnF, *gr.* 854? I have not been able to find this witness (cf. Baudoin 2008, 191 n. 33).

on the Greek text I edited in my master's dissertation (2007). The references will be given to Tischendorf's edition when possible; otherwise I shall quote the manuscripts themselves, which I identified, classified, and described in 2008.<sup>5</sup> To the distinction of two recensions I added the subdivision of each recension in two families (see *Appendix*).

Recension A of the *Anaphora* (Geerard sec. 66) is usually transmitted with the text known as *Paradosis Pilati* (eleven out of seventeen manuscripts known to me<sup>6</sup>), whereas recension B (Geerard sec. 65) goes together with the *Rescriptum Tiberii* (eleven out of twenty). The *Paradosis* depicts the trial of Pilate before the emperor in Rome, his condemnation to death, and his decapitation as a blessed martyr. The text entitled *Rescriptum Tiberii* explains how the Jewish nation is punished by Roman soldiers and describes the violent death of the chiefs of the Jews, as well as that of Pilate. It may be argued that the distinction between the *Anaphora* and its two satellite texts is mostly a result of printed editions (Aragione 2009); indeed, manuscripts rarely distinguish the second text from the first one. Occasionally, however, they do (cf. ms. O; see *Appendix* and Baudoin 2008, 194–195), and I think it makes sense to read the *Anaphora* as a whole, without its satellites: among the manuscripts transmitting recension B of the *Anaphora*, five have it followed by the *Paradosis* and at least two intentionally omit it; for recension A, at least one of the manuscripts presents the *Anaphora* with the *Rescriptum* (ms. P; Baudoin 2008, 201–202).

In the manuscripts of the first family of rec. A the title reads Ἀναφορὰ Πιλάτου ἡγεμόνος περὶ τοῦ Δεσπότης ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ πεμφθεῖσα Αὐγούστῳ Καίσαρι ἐν τῇ Ῥώμῃ, “Report of Pilate the governor about our Lord Jesus Christ, sent to Augustus Caesar in Rome.”<sup>7</sup> The title of the text in the manuscript tradition falls under the categories of both imposture and plagiarism, in so far as it purports to be a report sent to Caesar by a Roman governor. However, the designation of Jesus as “Our Lord Jesus Christ” points to a forgery. It is worth noting that the manuscripts of the second family have ἐπιστολή, “letter,” instead of the more precise ἀναφορά, and that the word is more or less followed by the same elements, except for the mention of “our Lord Jesus Christ.” Moreover, the emperor is designated as Augustus in most manuscripts, but as Tiberius in manuscripts A and FP, which is historically correct. Hence, it could be argued that

<sup>5</sup> Two additional manuscripts have recently been brought to my attention by Furrer 2010, 30; they are Athos, Lavra, K.81, 1368, and Athos, Vatopedi, 776, 18<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>6</sup> To my description of the manuscripts (Baudoin 2008) that led to the sum of ten, I add a new information gathered from the reading of the manuscript of Munich, BSB, gr. 524: there the quite unusual form of the *Anaphora* is followed by a shorter version of the *Paradosis* (it does not include par. 10).

<sup>7</sup> Ms. B excepted—it begins with the prologue of the *Acta Pilati* (Tischendorf 1853, 413).

the variations in the title as transmitted in the second family of rec. A are an attempt to render the forgery more credible.

In rec. B, most manuscripts of the first family begin with an introductory sentence referring to the text as Ἐπιστολὴ Ποντίου Πιλάτου πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα Τιβέριον περὶ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἧς ἡ ἐπιγραφὴ ἔχει οὕτως, “A Letter of Pontius Pilate to the King Tiberius concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, whose title is such” (rewritten in HLS), and then they give a variant of the title as found in rec. A and in the second family of rec. B. However, this second title is expanded in the first family with the mention of “Pontius” and specifies that he is governor “of Judea”; the mention of Jesus is omitted in the first family and reappears at the end of the title in the second one. In all the manuscripts of rec. B that I read, the emperor is Tiberius. This comparison suggests that the core title of the text is Ἀναφορὰ Πιλάτου and that the scribes felt the need to gloss the rather uncommon and technical word ἀναφορά with the more usual designation ἐπιστολή.

The text is clearly attributed to Pontius Pilate, whether he is called with one or two names. His title is unanimously ἡγεμὼν, in agreement with the canonical gospels but at odds with historical reality, given that the proper title was ἑπαρχος (*praefectus*; Lémonon 1981, 23–33). The document is said to have been sent to the emperor. I shall leave aside the matter of the name of the emperor. Indeed, Luke mentions both Augustus (2:1, about the birth of Jesus) and Tiberius (3:1, about the beginning of John the Baptist’s predication), and Augustus’ name can easily be used as a generic title. The matter of Pilate’s title is more interesting and, since it is taken up in the first lines of text, I shall now discuss it.

*The introduction to the report (rec. A)  
as a link between Acta Pilati and Anaphora*

In rec. A, a short introduction (omitted in OFP) provides a frame for the text; it does not appear in rec. B.<sup>8</sup> It should be noted that none of the manuscripts of this second recension contains the *Acta Pilati*, whereas the manuscripts transmitting both *Acta Pilati* and *Anaphora*—rec. A—may belong to any of the three groups distinguished by the current editors of the *Acta* for the *Corpus Christianorum ser. Apocryphorum*—that is, family φ, family χ and the “inclassable” manuscripts (Furrer 2010, 12–15; 30). Hence, there is no link between the form of the *Acta* text and the presence of the *Anaphora*, but there is one between the form of the *Anaphora* and the presence of the *Acta*: it is *Anaphora* rec. A that occurs

<sup>8</sup> It seems that the Arabic version also omits it (Dunlop Gibson 1896, 1).

with the *Acta*. One could well assume that this introduction was intended as a link between the *Acta Pilati* and the *Anaphora*.

I copy here the translation made available to the Anglophone readership in 1870:

In those days, our Lord Jesus Christ having been crucified under Pontius Pilate, procurator of Palestine and Phoenicia, these records were made in Jerusalem as to what was done by the Jews against the Lord. Pilate therefore, along with his private report, sent them to the Caesar in Rome, writing thus (Tischendorf 1853, 413; trans. Walker 1886, 460<sup>9</sup>).

The first points of interest in this paragraph appear to be linked to questions of translation. One is a detail: the use of the word “procurator” should be replaced by “governor” (ἡγεμών, not ἐπίτροπος). But most of all, the phrase “these records [...] as to what was done by the Jews against the Lord” requires a closer look. The Greek text is τὰ ὑπομνήματα τὰ κατὰ τοῦ Κυρίου πραχθέντα<sup>10</sup> ὑπὸ τῶν Ἰουδαίων. The Spanish translation of Santos Otero, one of the few translations of rec. A available in modern languages, offers the same reading as the English one: “estas memorias que refieren lo que hicieron los judíos contra el Señor” (1975, 478), as well as the Italian one of Moraldi: “il racconto delle cose passate da Gesù ad opera degli Ebrei” (1994, 742) and the 19<sup>th</sup> century French translation by Migne: “le récit des traitements éprouvés par Jésus de la part des Juifs fut écrit à Jérusalem” (1885, 754–755). From a grammatical point of view this seems too far from the actual syntax of the sentence. I think πραχθέντα is to be understood as an epithetical adjective supported by the repetition of the article; the presence of complements such as κατὰ τοῦ Κυρίου and ὑπὸ τῶν Ἰουδαίων made the repetition of τὰ necessary: τὰ ὑπομνήματα τὰ [...] πραχθέντα [...], “the records done [...].” That is how Fabricius understood the Greek manuscripts he edited and translated into Latin: “Acta haec composita sunt Hierosolymis, quae adversus Dominum egerent Judaei” (1743, 457).<sup>11</sup> So

<sup>9</sup> Ehrman 2011, 494–499 decided to translate rec. B, considering it “the more coherent and interesting of the two, with fewer secondary accretions” (491). Gounelle (2013, 307) translates rec. B following Thilo’s edition.

<sup>10</sup> τὰ - πραχθέντα: τὰ πραχθέντα κατὰ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ B.

<sup>11</sup> In Syriac, Dunlop Gibson also felt it necessary to amend the translation, but she pointed out that she was adding something: “Memoirs of [the things] that were done to our Lord Jesus the Christ by the hand of the Jews, by means of a writing of Pilate himself.” The Armenian version seems to add an “and,” cf. ms. Jerusalem, St. James, 1365 (14<sup>th</sup> century?): “There was this memoir in the city of Jerusalem and what was done on our Lord Je-

as a first step I propose to amend the translation in modern languages to “the records done [...] by the Jews.”

Of course, the phrase vividly echoes the *Acta Pilati* whose title in the manuscripts is a development around the simple form ὑπομνήματα τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ πραχθέντα ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου<sup>12</sup> (“Memoirs of our Lord Jesus Christ done under Pontius Pilate”). That is just a reminder that the modern title of *Acta Pilati* does not refer to a document written by Pilate; most manuscripts attribute the ὑπομνήματα to Nicodemus, whether in the prologue only (family φ, GCZ, and EIJ; Furrer 2010, 25–27), or in the head title itself as well as in the prologue (family χ and N; Furrer 2010, 21–22). One should then suppose that the figure of Nicodemus, designated as “head of the synagogue of the Jews” in some manuscripts (family χ), corresponds to “the Jews” in the *Anaphora*. The author would reuse the generic designation as ὑπομνήματα and assign it to the Jews, suggesting that the *records*, and not the deeds, were done by them (Furrer 2010, 20–23).

This phenomenon can be compared to the redaction of the “preface” that alludes to a certain Ananias as a translator of the records from Hebrew to Greek. This passage, transmitted in Greek by two manuscripts of φ (Tischendorf’s C—A of the *Anaphora*—and Z) as well as by the indirect witnesses of the *Narratio Iosephi rescripta* (Furrer 2010, 15), mentions “the records done at that time about our Lord Jesus Christ, that the Jews composed under Pontius Pilate” (τὰ ὑπομνήματα τὰ κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν ἐκεῖνον πραχθέντα ἐπὶ τοῦ δεσπότου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἃ κατέθεντο οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου, Furrer 2010, 24). This formulation is closer to the introduction to the *Anaphora*.

However, to stick to the title itself, none of the manuscripts of the *Acta Pilati* suggests that the *records*, and not the deeds, were done against Christ (Furrer 2010, 20–23). That may be the reason why ms. C and D of *Anaphora* rec. A omit τὰ ὑπομνήματα, which makes the sentence more usual: “the deeds done by the Jews against the Lord.” This omission or correction is interesting because it matches the codicological data about the content of the manuscripts: among the witnesses for this introduction, C and D are also the only manuscripts not transmitting the *Acta Pilati*. Two hypotheses can be made: either a scribe removed the mention of τὰ ὑπομνήματα that did not make sense any more after the *Anaphora* had been separated from the *Acta* in ms. C and D, or a scribe added it to the other group of rec. A because the whole formula strongly reminded him of

---

sus Christ by the Jews, that Pilate sent with his signature [...]” (trans. Bernard Outtier, personal communication).

<sup>12</sup> Ms. Milano, Ambr., C 92 sup., ms. F of the *Acta Pilati* (Furrer 2010, 20), ms. M of the *Anaphora*, cf. Appendix.

the title of the previous text. I would consider the first hypothesis more likely. This hints at a rather complex process of transmission of the text, considering that, among the second family, the *Anaphora* in ms. O and P—at least, to my knowledge—omits this introduction but follows the *Acta Pilati*.

In other words, the “records” are considered to be inimical towards Christ and are, as such, opposed to Pilate’s own letter: he sends them (αὐτά [αὐτοῦ A]), nevertheless, together with his own report (μετ’οικείας αὐτοῦ ἀναφορᾶς [δι’ ἀναφορᾶς ἰδίας B]). So, if the introduction of the *Anaphora* links it with the *Acta*, did the author of this introduction consider the *Acta* to have been “made by the Jews against Christ”?

This phrase may resonate with the well-known allusions of Eusebius of Caesarea to “[those] having forged records of Pilate and our Saviour” in book 9 of the *Historia Ecclesiastica* (ch. 5, par. 1: πλασάμενοι [...] Πιλάτου καὶ τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν ὑπομνήματα); those writings are said to be “full of all blasphemy against Christ” (ch. 5, par. 1: πάσης ἔμπλεα κατὰ τοῦ Χριστοῦ βλασφημίας) and are called, a few lines later, “the records forged in wantonness” (ch. 7, par. 1: τὰ ἐφ’ ὅδῳ πλασθέντα ὑπομνήματα). It is likely that Eusebius alludes to the same work in book 1, where he denounces “the forgery of those who recently spread the records against our Saviour” (ch. 9, par. 3: τὸ πλάσμα τῶν κατὰ τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν ὑπομνήματα χθὲς καὶ πρόην διαδεδοκότων) and “those who forged the records against them” (ch. 11, par. 9: τοὺς τὰ κατ’ αὐτῶν πλασαμένους ὑπομνήματα). It would be tempting to argue that the author of the opening lines of rec. A of the *Anaphora* took inspiration from Eusebius to describe the records as being done “against Christ.” However, Eusebius insists that those forged records against Christ are recent, whereas the *Anaphora* opens with the statement that the records were done at the time of the crucifixion—that is, the author would not have consistently followed his source.

Regarding the link with Eusebius, I would suggest that the understanding of the preposition κατὰ followed by the genitive as meaning “against” in the modern translations of the *Anaphora* is influenced by this author. It could actually be translated as “concerning our Lord,” a meaning widely attested. It may also have to do with the specific attribution of the records to the Jews. Indeed, the most recent researches on the *Acta Pilati* tend to describe it as a “Judeo-Christian text”—that is, a text originating in a Jewish milieu influenced by nascent Christianity (Gounelle 2013). Could the indication of “records done by the Jews” be an allusion to the Jewish aspects of the text that would have been even clearer to the antique reader than they are to us today? Why not consider that this introduction transmitted at least by four witnesses out of nine<sup>13</sup> containing both the *Acta*

<sup>13</sup> Based on my own reading of the manuscripts.

*Pilati* and the *Anaphora* (Furrer 2010, 30) is an addition by a scribe who felt the strong difference of tone between the Jewish text of the *Acta Pilati* and the *Anaphora*? Of course this is likely to be a hyper-historical reading of the text. Unfortunately, I have not yet uncovered any additional clues that might support this hypothesis. So let me now focus on another point of the introduction to rec. A.

*Geography and history: about the date of composition*

In the introduction to the report itself, Pilate is said to have sent to Rome both the records and his own report, whose text follows, as indicated by οὕτως. It is not the place here to study all the other pieces of the so-called “Pilatus’ cycle” (Geerard sec. 64–78) nor to guess which came first. Since I decided to focus on the *Anaphora*, I shall carefully consider the geographical indications that appear in the introduction and compare them to other references scattered in the text.

*Palestine: a post-Eusebian mention?*

In all manuscripts containing the introduction to rec. A known to me, Pilate is designated as “the governor of Palestine and Phoenicia.”<sup>14</sup> This is not usual. The name “Palestine,” if biblical, is not used in the New Testament. Indeed, it does not refer to a political entity in the first century; it first appears in the denomination “Syria-Palestina,” when Syria and Judea are merged by Hadrian during the Bar-Kochba revolt, in 134 (Sartre 1998, 430). Referring to this province by its almost contemporary name,<sup>15</sup> Tertullian alludes to Tiberius “having himself received intelligence from <Syria->Palestine of events which had clearly shown <there> the truth of Christ’s divinity” (*Apologeticum* ch. 5, sec. 2, Dekkers 1954, 94–95: *annuntiata sibi ex Syria*<sup>16</sup> *Palaestina, quae illic ueritatem istius diuinitatis reuelauerant*; trans. Thelwall 1885, 22, with my amendments indicat-

<sup>14</sup> Also Syriac: “Pilate, to whom was committed the dominion of Palestine and Phenicia” (Dunlop Gibson 1896, éd. [640], trans. [492]), and Armenian: “Judge of the Palestinians and of the land of Phœnicians” (by courtesy of Outtier).

<sup>15</sup> Actually in 195, to diminish the power of the legate of Syria, Septimius Severus also divides Syria into Coele-Syria and Syria-Phoenicia, thus fulfilling a project of Hadrian (Abel 1938, 168). The *Apologeticum* is dated around 197.

<sup>16</sup> It is interesting that the word Syria would here be omitted by Thelwall in the translation as well as in ch. 21 sec. 18, *Syriam tunc ex parte Romana procuranti* (Dekkers 1954, 126), translated as “at that time Roman governor” (Thelwall 1885, 35). Unfortunately, I do not have access to any more recent, printed English translation.

ed by <>). Eusebius' *Historia Ecclesiastica* transmits a Greek translation of this passage<sup>17</sup> where the indication of place is changed to "from Palestine" (bk 2, ch. 2, par. 6: ἐκ Παλαιστίνης). It echoes the summary that introduces the translation: "Pilate shared with the emperor Tiberius the rumours of the resurrection from the dead of our Saviour Jesus that were noised abroad to all through the whole Palestine" (bk 2, ch. 2, par. 2).<sup>18</sup> Hence, I suggest that the mention of Palestine as the province of Pilate may be linked to Eusebius' mention. To my knowledge there is no other mention in late antique literature of Pilate being the governor of *Palestine*. This may be a second hint of the Eusebian influence on the introduction to the *Anaphora*.

*The most unusual mention  
of Phoenicia and the question of Pilate's jurisdiction*

The second province mentioned in Pilate's title is Phoenicia. That again is extremely unusual. Phoenicia, when named in the biblical text, is usually associated with Coele-Syria (2 M 3:5.8; 4:4; 8:8). It is among the places visited in the *Acts of the Apostles* (11:19; 15:3; 21:2). Historically speaking, however, it was not under Pilate's jurisdiction: Pilate was in charge of Judea, a territory that grew during the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D., but never incorporated Phoenicia (Lémonon 1981, 33–41). Moreover, in the New Testament, the only verse associating Pilate with a territory speaks of Judea ("Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea," Luke 3:1) and distinguishes it clearly from other tetrarchies.

In the *inscriptio* of the *Anaphora*, rec. A and B, "Pilate" refers to "himself" as "administrating the government of the East" (ὁ τὴν ἀνατολικὴν διέπων ἀρχήν, Tischendorf 1853, 413–420).<sup>19</sup> Variants on the verb are not relevant here, but one may notice that some manuscripts read the more technical ἐπαρχίαν instead of ἀρχήν (rec. A, ms. A, cf. Tischendorf 1853, 413,<sup>20</sup> and OFP). The classical meaning of ἐπαρχία could be either *praefectura*, the Greek equivalent of *praefectus*, "prefect" being ἐπαρχος, or *provincia*. Would the word be used as an attempt to ensure the plausibility of plagiarism? But nowhere in late antique literature is Pilate called "prefect" (ἐπαρχος) or in charge of a ἐπαρχία. However

<sup>17</sup> Whether Eusebius translated it himself or used a previous translation, maybe Julius Africanus', is discussed by Harnack (1892).

<sup>18</sup> τὰ περὶ τῆς ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστάσεως τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ εἰς πάντας ἡδὴ καθ' ὅλης Παλαιστίνης βεβοημένα Πιλάτος Τιβερίῳ Βασιλεῖ κοινοῦται (my translation).

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Syriac versions ("of the region of the East, of the cities of Phoenicia," Dunlop Gibson 1986, ed. [640] trans. [492]). Arabic has: "over Palestine and the coast" (Dunlop Gibson 1896, trans. [493]). I am not able to read Arabic.

<sup>20</sup> B has a variant reading: ἀνατολῆς τελωνάρχης (Tischendorf 1853, 413).



the word *ἐπαρχία* is used again a few lines later in both recensions in a closely related sentence, “in the very *ἐπαρχία* that I administrate” (ἐν ταύτῃ γὰρ ἦν περ διέπω *ἐπαρχίαν*, with the antecedent being attracted into the relative clause, rec. A, par. 1, Tischendorf 1853, 414, cf. rec. B, ταύτην γὰρ διέποντός μου τὴν *ἐπαρχίαν*, “as I was administrating this *ἐπαρχία*”: 420). So the rather technical use of *ἐπαρχία* calls for attention.

The structure of the sentence that follows also requires a closer look. In both recensions the main verbal group of the sentence is “the whole crowd of the Jews delivered to me a man called Jesus”<sup>21</sup> and that is clear enough. But a relative clause is added between this group and the mention of the *ἐπαρχία* in both recensions.<sup>22</sup> Rec. B seems a little easier to understand: “(the *ἐπαρχία*) that is one of the Eastern cities, called Jerusalem” (ἥτις ἐστὶ τῶν ἀνατολικῶν πόλεων μία καλουμένη Ἱερουσαλήμ,<sup>23</sup> Tischendorf 1853, 420<sup>24</sup>), assuming that *ἐπαρχία* would here be reduced to one city.<sup>25</sup> We could rely on this understanding of rec. B to read rec. A as “(the *ἐπαρχία*) that, [being] one of the cities, is called Jerusalem” (ἥτις μία τῶν πόλεων καλεῖται<sup>26</sup> Ἱερουσαλήμ, Tischendorf 1853, 414<sup>27</sup>). At this point we face an alternative: either the *Anaphora* is using a technical word, describing precisely Pilate’s jurisdiction as historically known, but not attested elsewhere in ancient literature, or it makes a wide approximation, reducing this

<sup>21</sup> ἅπαν τὸ πλῆθος τῶν Ἰουδαίων παρέδωκάν μοι ἄνθρωπὸν τινα λεγόμενον Ἰησοῦν, rec. A, par. 1, Tischendorf 1853, 414, cf. rec. B: 420.

<sup>22</sup> Rec. B has an expanded version with a direct address to the emperor, ὦ δέσποτα, “Master” (equivalent of Latin *Domine*), the mention of Pilate’s subordination to him, κατὰ πρόσταξιν τῆς σῆς γαληνότητος, “according to the commandment of your clemency.” Variants are minor; the one worth noting is the use of plural of majesty in the second family of rec. B, τῆς ὑμετέρας γαληνότητος.

<sup>23</sup> Rec. B, first family, adds: ἐν ᾗ τὸ ἱερόν τοῦ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἔθνους καθίδρυται, “in which the temple of the people of the Jews is established” (second family: ἐν ᾗ τὸ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἔθνος καθίδρυται).

<sup>24</sup> Rec. B, mostly first family; second family has somehow ἥτις ἐστὶ μία τῶν πόλεων καλουμένη Ἱερουσαλήμ.

<sup>25</sup> That is how it was understood by Walker 1886, 462 (“For while [...] I was discharging the duties of my government which is one of the cities of the East, Jerusalem by name”), Gounelle 2005, 311 (“alors que j’exerçais cette charge de préfet [...] sur une des villes d’Orient appelée Jérusalem”); Moraldi 1994, 745 adds a verb to match historical situation (“Alloché io avevo il governo [...] e mi trovavo in una città orientale di nome Gerusalemme”).

<sup>26</sup> καλεῖται CD Tischendorf 1853: κέκληται MEAB.

<sup>27</sup> I don’t see how one could follow Walker 1886, 460 (“For in this government of mine, of which one of the cities is called Jerusalem”), Moraldi 1994, 742 (“Nell’eparchia [...] che io amministro in una città di nome Gerusalemme”). Santos Otero 1975, 478 may be closer (“en esta provincia que gobierno, única entre las ciudades en cuanto al nombre de Jerusalén”).

jurisdiction over Judea to the city of Jerusalem. Let us add that when the reader reaches this line of the first paragraph, he has already been told that Pilate was “governor of Judea” (rec. B, first family) or “governor of Palestine and Phoenicia” (rec. A, excl. OFP<sup>28</sup>).

I think that the presence of the relative clause designating the ἐπαρχία as “Jerusalem” makes it clear that the forger is using the word ἐπαρχία not in its classical meaning but with a Byzantine, ecclesiastical meaning. Indeed, it can be compared with letter 569 of Barsanuphius to the hesychiasts: Barsanuph explains that three men who are perfect in the eyes of God have the power to bind or to unbind (cf. Matth. 18:18) and he exhorts his correspondents to pray with them. The three men are designated as follows: “There are John in Rome, Elias in Corinth, and another in the eparchy of Jerusalem” (Εἰσὶ δὲ Ἰωάννης ἐν Ῥώμῃ καὶ Ἠλίας ἐν Κορίνθῳ, καὶ ἄλλος ἐν τῇ ἐπαρχίᾳ Ἱεροσολύμων, Neyt 2001, 734). This third person is likely to be Barsanuph himself, modestly not spelling out his name (Neyt 2001, 735 n. 4). Historians note here that it implies that Barsanuph’s monastery, lead by abbas Seridos, is in the eparchy of Jerusalem; what is important for us is that a monk living in the first half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century would refer to his region as the “eparchy of Jerusalem.”

This prompts a question: when would someone refer to the region surrounding Jerusalem as “the ἐπαρχία of Jerusalem”? As we saw earlier, the region’s official name is Palestine, with or without a mention of Syria, since the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D. In the 4<sup>th</sup> century, the correspondence of Libanios (*Ep.* 337) attests to a division of Palestine into *Palestina* and *Palestina Salutaris*. The *Synecdemos* by Hierocles, a table of administrative divisions of the Byzantine empire composed under Justinian, before 535, reveals the existence of three Palestines—as well as two Phoenicias and two Syrias; Jerusalem (par. 718.8, Honigman 1939, 41) belongs to the first (ΠΑΛΑΙΣΤΙΝΑ Α’, ἐπαρχία Παλαιστίνης, par. 717.8, Honigman 1939, 41). This division into three Palestines dates back to 400 at the latest (Abel 1938, 170). The metropolis is Caesarea of Palestine (Caesarea Maritima) (Abel 1952, 318) but Jerusalem has an honorific primacy (Abel 1938, 198<sup>29</sup>). So we could assume that the designation of the region as “ἐπαρχία of Jerusalem,” alluding to the highest ranking city of Jerusalem, could date back to the time when ecclesiastical provinces were created in the 4<sup>th</sup> century. The allu-

<sup>28</sup> It is not the place to study the longer prologue of those manuscripts that develop the narrative frame although, to my knowledge, they have not yet been edited.

<sup>29</sup> “L’évêque du chef-lieu de la province devenait naturellement le centre du groupement épiscopal de l’éparchie ecclésiastique, sauf quelques exceptions dues aux origines mêmes de l’évangélisation” (Abel 1938, 197).

sion to the “eparchy of Jerusalem” in the first paragraph of the *Anaphora* would give a first *terminus a quo* in the Constantinian era.

However, I think it would be wise to put this date forward by taking under consideration both the insistence on Jerusalem and the mention of Phoenicia. During the council of Chalcedon the patriarchate of Jerusalem is established: hence the official designation of the geographical area integrates the name of the city. And a rearrangement of the episcopal jurisdiction leads to the reunion of the two Phoenicias and Arabia under the jurisdiction of Maxime of Antioch, whereas Juvenal of Jerusalem is in charge of the three Palestines. After 451, Palestine and Phoenicia are two patriarchates. Hence I would keep the second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D. as the *terminus a quo* for the *Anaphora*—at least in the form of the text that has reached us.

### *The emphasis put on two miracles*

The report of Pilate consists out of two main parts, a retelling of some miracles and a depiction of events accompanying the crucifixion and the resurrection. The miracles are introduced by a list echoing Matth. 11:5 (influenced by Isa. 35:5–6); then some acts performed by Jesus are described more precisely, first Lazarus, taken from John 11, and then Matthean miracles that have parallels in the other synoptic Gospels, the possessed by devils in the country of the Gadarenes (8:28–33), the man with the withered hand (12:10–13) and a woman suffering from hemorrhages (9:20–22).

Let us turn our attention to the miracles involving the possessed and the woman suffering from hemorrhages. First, it should be noted that they form part of the same narrative of the synoptic Gospels: Jesus is teaching and performing miracles in Capernaum (Matth. 8:5–22); then he takes a boat and crosses the Sea of Galilee to the land of the Gadarenes (8:23–34), and comes back to Capernaum (ch. 9) where he heals a paralytic (9:2–8),<sup>30</sup> teaches, heals the bleeding woman, and finally resurrects the daughter of Jairus. Gounelle (2005) has pointed out that the emphasis put on the possessed in the country of Gadarenes might refer to a cult that developed in this region (306); indeed, such a cult is attested from the 5<sup>th</sup> century at Chorsias (Maraval 1985, 296–297): the place is identified as the New Testament Gergessa, whose monastery and church could be dated to

<sup>30</sup> It would be tempting to assume that the miracle described in the *Anaphora* (par. 3) is a rewriting of the story of the man with the withered hand, influenced by the story of the paralytic, considering the emphasis: “And not the hand only, but rather the half of the body of the man, was petrified, so that he had not the form of a man, or the power of moving his body” (Tischendorf 1853, 416, trans. Walker 1886, 460; cf. rec. B, Tischendorf 1853, 422, trans. Walker 1886, 462).

the 5<sup>th</sup> century; a baptistery was added in 585 (Tsaferis 1972, 410–411). Cyril of Scythopolis (6<sup>th</sup> century) speaks about a pilgrimage of Sabas († 532) and his companions who prayed “in Chorsias, in the Seven-Springs, in the other holy places around there and as far as Paneas” (par. 24<sup>31</sup>). One could also add that to the veneration of the tomb of Lazarus in Bethania, attested from the 4<sup>th</sup> century onwards (Maraval 1985, 277), but I have not been able to find any reference to a place where the healing of the paralytic or of the man with the withered hand was commemorated.

The last miracle to be mentioned is the healing of a woman suffering from hemorrhages. It takes place, according to the Synoptic Gospels, in Capernaum (Matth. 8:5; 9:9). I shall focus here on the last sentence. The text of the *Anaphora* says that after being healed, she started running to her city. In rec. A, she runs “to her own city, Capernaum” (εἰς τὴν ἑαυτῆς πόλιν Κεφαρναούμ, Tischendorf 1853, 416) and in rec. B “To her city, Paneas” (εἰς τὴν αὐτῆς πόλιν Πανεάδα, Tischendorf 1853, 422). Actually, for rec. B, Paneas is a conjecture of Tischendorf, following Thilo on this point. As he notes himself, ms. A and B have Σπανίαν, C and D omit this passage. My own reading of the manuscripts indicates that CGOEP have a larger omission,<sup>32</sup> D and F omit the indication of place, and the name of the city is Ἰσπανίαν in HLS and πανίαν in M. The correction suggested by Thilo is influenced by Eusebius who mentions “at Caesarea Philippi, which the Phoenicians call Paneas” (ἐπὶ τῆς Φιλίππου Καισαρείας, ἣν Πανεάδα Φοίνικες προσαγορεύουσιν) two memorials to the bleeding woman, her house and a statue that he describes as the woman kneeling in front of Jesus<sup>33</sup> (bk 7, ch. 17–18). The origins of this cult is debated (Wilson 2004, 81–93) but it is widely attested in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries (108–109), as we saw earlier with Sabas mentioning his praying there. Besides Eusebius’ testimony, supporting Thilo’s conjecture is the mention of Phoenicia in the introduction to rec. A. Indeed, as Eusebius alludes to, Paneas belongs to the “eparchy of Phoenicia,” according to Hierocles (par. 715.5, Honigmann 1939, 40, cf. 716.9, 41).

But to use the mention of Phoenicia as an argument brings us back to the reading offered here by rec. A, where the woman is said to run “to her own city, Capernaum” (par. 4). That reading does not follow the synoptic Gospels where the miracle actually *takes place* in Capernaum. I would suggest two possibilities. The edited text could be amended from εἰς τὴν ἑαυτῆς πόλιν Κεφαρναούμ

<sup>31</sup> εὐξάμενοι εἰς τὸν Χορσίαν καὶ τὴν Ἐπτάπληγον καὶ εἰς τοὺς λοιποὺς αὐτόθι σεβασμίους τόπους καὶ ἕως Πανιάδος, Schwartz 1939, 108.

<sup>32</sup> From καὶ γέγονεν to the end of the paragraph (par. 4) in Tischendorf’s edition.

<sup>33</sup> For further remarks on the woman with the issue of blood and her identification, cf. Dubois 2012.

(Tischendorf 1853, 416) to εἰς τὴν ἑαυτῆς πόλιν <ἐκ> Κεφαρναούμ. The correction is slight from a palaeographical point of view but no manuscripts attest it; however, it is supported by the Arabic version of the text, according to Dunlop Gibson's translation: "[she] went running to her own town, Banias, from Capernaum" (Dunlop Gibson 1896, 494 n. 1). That agrees with the indication that she reaches her city with a six days journey (rec. A<sup>34</sup>). Another possibility is to assume multiple corrections done by successive scribes. The original text would read "to her own town, Banias." A copyist expert in Palestinian geography would add that it is "six days away." Then a well-meaning copyist would correct "Banias" into "Capernaum," following the New Testament text but leaving the comment about the journey. In this regard the Munich manuscript (BSB, gr. 524) would offer an attempt to correct this last stage by reading "to her own town, Capernaum, six days away from Jerusalem." Either way we cannot assume that the indication of place in the original text was different from that of the Gospels; there must have been some disturbance in the transmission.

The study of two miracles retold in the *Anaphora* confirms both hypotheses built earlier in this paper: 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D. seems a likely date of composition and the geographical origin of the text put in Palestine and Phoenicia is confirmed by New Testament details such as the probable mention of Paneas and the expression of the distance between this city and Capernaum, if one of the propositions of emendation has convinced the reader.

This study has focused on only a handful of details of the first part of the *Anaphora Pilati*. Prior to the address and the official beginning of the letter, the introduction given by rec. A has revealed three peculiarities. First, it mostly exists as such as a link between the *Acta Pilati* and the *Anaphora*; secondly, the attribution to the Jews of the "Memoirs done against (or concerning) the Lord" may result from an almost exact quote from some specific manuscripts of the *Acta Pilati*, which implies that the *Anaphora* as we read it today was composed later to accompany the *Acta* and that it was influenced by Eusebius; and finally, Pilate is called "governor of Palestine and of Phoenicia," which may also suggest a dependence on Eusebius and point to the near-Eastern provinces as a

<sup>34</sup> The Greek text is πλησιάζειν τὴν πορείαν ἡμερῶν ἕξ (Tischendorf 1853, 416) without variants but the omission of τὴν in B. Modern translators understand it as a six days journey, but the grammatical structure is not easy and most of the time they avoid a precise translation, as I shall do here ("et sex dierum iter absoluere potuit," Fabricius 1743, 461; "so as to accomplish the journey in six days," Walker 1886, 460; "con un viaggio di sei giorni," Moraldi 1994, 743; "estando a punto de igualar la marcha de seis jornadas," Santos Otero 1975, 481; cf. Arabic, "And that was not near it, a journey of six days," Dunlop Gibson 1896, 494).

place of its origin. Then, in the first paragraph, the close study of the grammatical structure and the use of the word ἐπαρχία offer a plausible date of the redaction after the council of Chalcedon, when the former province of Judea is known as the “eparchy of Jerusalem.” Indications of the introduction and of the first paragraph can be confirmed by a possible allusion to the cult of the healed from demonic possession in Chorsias, on the Eastern coast of the Sea of Galilee, and to the woman suffering from hemorrhages in Paneas (Caesarea Philippi), a southern city of the eparchy of Phoenicia. That would point to the text originating in a Palestino-Phoenician milieu, maybe among the Byzantine monks of the late 5<sup>th</sup>– early 6<sup>th</sup> century. None of our manuscripts was copied before the 12<sup>th</sup> century; that is why Dunlop Gibson was absolutely right in assuming that the Arabic versions “possess a higher antiquity than the Greek texts published by [Tischendorf]” (1896, xiii), considering that one of her manuscripts is dated 799 A.D. The early translation into Arabic could be an additional hint of the region of origin.

There is no more place here to properly study other details of the text such as the biblical quotations or allusions, the depiction of the events accompanying the death and the resurrection of Christ, the question of the moment of the resurrection and its consequences for the Jews, which could also reflect specificities of the period and place of composition. I shall conclude by underlining that this text, though presented as a “report” of Pilate about Jesus, is actually a true testimony on the cults of a specific Christian community. The real forgeries attached to this text are actually the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century attempts to correct in the translation the difficulties of the Greek text. All of that cries for a new, complete edition of the *Anaphora Pilati* that would also take under consideration versions other than Greek.

#### *Appendix:*

#### *some manuscripts of the Anaphora Pilati grouped by recensions and subfamilies*

These are the manuscripts I read and edited in my master’s dissertation (2007). Letters A to E have been given by Tischendorf (unfortunately, his choice was not consistent in the edition of the *Acta Pilati* and of the *Anaphora*: for instance, manuscript A of the *Anaphora*, Paris, BnF, gr. 770, is called C in the edition of the *Acta*). Others are my choice and follow as closely as possible the initial of the city or of the collection. Some codicological indications and details about the dating and transmission are given in Baudoin 2008.

Recension A (*CANT* 66)

first family: ME CD

**M** (Milano, Ambr., C 92 sup. (N155)) [called F by the editors of the *Acta Pilati* for the *Corpus Christianorum ser. Apocryphorum*, cf. Furrer 2010, 12]

**E** (London, BL, *Harl.* 5636) as copy of M or such [K, cf. Furrer 2010, 13]

**C** (Milano, Ambr., E 100 sup. (307))

**D** (Paris, BnF, *Coisl.* 117) closely related to C, maybe a copy

second family: A B OFP

**A** (Paris, BnF, *gr.* 770) [called C by Tischendorf 1853, lxxi; cf. Furrer 2010, 12]

**B** (Paris, BnF, *gr.* 929) [E by Tischendorf 1853, lxxi, cf. Furrer 2010, 12]<sup>35</sup>

**O** (Oxford, Bodl., *Holkham gr.* 9)

**F** (Athens, 2972), closely related to O

**P** (Paris, BnF, *Suppl. gr.* 1169) probably shares an ancestor with O

Recension B (*CANT* 65)

first family: DA BKHLS MF

**D** (Paris, BnF, *gr.* 1019A)

**A** (Vienna, ÖNB, *theol. gr.* 247) probably shares an ancestor with D

**B** (Torino, BNU, c.II,5 (302))

**K** (Athos, Mon. Lavra, K. 64) probably shares an ancestor with B (but I had access to a very small portion of the text)

**H** (London, BL, *Harl.* 5556) closely related to K (descendant?)

**L** (London, BL, *Burn.* 342) closely related to K (descendant?)

**S** (Paris, BnF, *Suppl. gr.* 78) copy of L

**M** (Milano, Ambr., H 22 sup. (426))

**F** (London, BL, *Add.* 25881) probably shares an ancestor with M

second family: CGO EP

**C** (Venezia, Marc., II, 42)

**G** (Madrid, Escor., ω IV.18 (570)) copy of C

**O** (Oxford, Bodl., *Linc.* 1) probably shares an ancestor with C

**E** (Paris, BnF, *gr.* 1331)

**P** (Patmos, Mon. of St John the Theologian, 448) probably shares an ancestor with E.

<sup>35</sup> The *Anaphora* text transmitted in Munich, BSB, *gr.* 524, and on which, to my knowledge, no study has ever been published, seems to be closely related to this manuscript.

## References

### 1. Editions and translations of the *Anaphora Pilati* (chronological order)

- Fabricius, Johannes Albertus. (1743), *Codex Apocryphus Novi Testamenti*, repr. 2d ed., vol. 2, Hambourg: Christian Herold.
- Birch, Andreas. (1804), *Auctarium Codicis Apocryphi Novi Testamenti Fabriciani, continens plura inedita, alia ad fidem codd. emmendatius expressa*, fasc. 1, Copenhagen: Arntzen and Hartier.
- Thilo, Johann Carl. (1832), *Codex Apocryphus Novi Testamenti, e libris editis et manuscriptis, maxime Gallicanis, Germanicis et Italicis, collectus, recensitus notisque et prolegomenis illustratus*, Leipzig: F. C. W. Vogel.
- Fleck, Ferdinand Florens. (1837), *Wissenschaftliche Reise durch das südliche Deutschland, Italien, Sicilien und Frankreich*, vol. 2, Leipzig: J. H. Barth.
- Tischendorf, Constantin. (1853), *Evangelia Apocrypha, adhibitis plurimis codicibus Graecis et Latinis maximam partem nunc primum consultis atque ineditorum copia insignibus*, Leipzig: Avenarius et Mendelssohn.
- Walker, Alexander. (1886), "Report of Pilate the procurator concerning our Lord Jesus Christ sent to the August Caesar in Rome, first Greek form" and "second Greek form." *The Ante-Nicene Fathers. Translations of the Writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325* 8. Ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe. Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., rev. 1951, 460–463.
- Dunlop Gibson, Margaret. (1896), "Anaphora Pilati. Three recensions (in Syriac and Arabic)". *Studia Sinaitica* 5. *Apocrypha Sinaitica*. London: C. J. Clay and Sons. intr. vii–xiv [419–485]. ed. syr. [640]–[635], ar. [624]–[617], trans. [492]–[497].
- Santos Otero, Aurelio de. (1975), *Los Evangelios Apócrifos. Colección de textos griegos y latinos, versión crítica, estudios introductorios y comentarios*. 3ª ed., Madrid: Biblioteca de autores cristianos.
- Moraldi, Luigi. (1994), *Apocrifi del Nuovo Testamento*. vol. 1: Vangeli, Casale Montferrato: Piemme.
- Gounelle, Rémi. (2005), "Rapport de Pilate. Réponse de Tibère à Pilate. Cycle de Pilate." *Écrits apocryphes chrétiens*, vol. 2. Ed. Pierre Geoltrain et Jean-Daniel Kaestli, Paris: Gallimard, 299–327.

### 2. Antique writers

- Barsanuph and John of Gaza. *Quaestiones et responsiones ad coenobitas (Epistulae 224–616)*. ed. Neyt, François, and Angelis-Noah, Paula de, trans. Regnault, Lucien. vol. 2, *Aux cénobites*, t. 2: *Lettres 399–616*. Sources chrétiennes 451. Paris: Cerf, 2001.
- Cyril of Scythopolis. *Vita Sabae*. ed. Eduard Schwartz. *Kyrillos von Skythopolis. Texte und Untersuchungen* 49.2. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1939, 85–200.
- Eusebius of Caesarea, *Historia Ecclesiastica*. Ed. Eduard Schwartz. *Eusebius Werke zweiter Band: die Kirchengeschichte. Erster Teil: Die Bücher I bis V*. Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte 9.1, Eusebius 2.1, Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1903.
- Eusebius of Caesarea, *Historia Ecclesiastica*. Ed. Eduard Schwartz. *Eusebius Werke zweiter Band: die Kirchengeschichte. Erster Teil: Die Bücher VI bis X*. Die griechischen christli-



- chen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte 9.2, Eusebius 2.2, Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1908.
- Hierocles. *Synekdemos*. ed. Ernest Honigmann. *Le Synekdomos d'Hiéroklos et l'opuscule géographique de Georges de Chypre*. Corpus bruxellense historiae byzantinae; Forma imperii Byzantini 1. Bruxelles: Institut de philologie et d'histoire orientales et slaves, 1939.
- Justin of Neapolis, *Apologia* 1. Ed. Denis Minns and Paul Parvis. *Justin, Philosopher and Martyr. Apologies*. Oxford Early Christian Text. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009
- Tertullian of Carthage (Quintus Septimus Florens). *Apologeticum*. Ed. Eligius Dekkers. *Tertulliani opera. Pars I: opera catholica, aduersus Marcionem*. Corpus Christianorum Ser. Latina 1. Turnhout: Brepols, 1954, 77–171.
- Tertullian of Carthage (Quintus Septimus Florens). *Apologeticum*. Trans. Sydney Thelwall. Ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers. Translations of the Writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325 3: Latin Christianity: Its Founder, Tertullian*. Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885, 17–55.

### 3. Studies and instruments

- Abel, F.-M. (1952), *Histoire de la Palestine depuis la conquête d'Alexandre jusqu'à l'invasion arabe*. t. 2: *De la guerre juive à l'invasion arabe*. Études bibliques, Paris: J. Gabalda et C<sup>ie</sup>.
- Abel, F.-M. (1938), *Géographie de la Palestine*. t. 2: *Géographie politique. Les villes. Études bibliques*, Paris: J. Gabalda et C<sup>ie</sup>.
- Aragione, Gabriela. (2009), "Anaphora Pilati, Paradosis Pilati et Tiberii Responsum." Oral communication given during the Dole, June 2009 Annual meeting of Association pour l'Étude de la Littérature Apocryphe Chrétienne.
- Baudoin, Anne-Catherine. (2007), *Édition et traduction d'un texte apocryphe grec: le Rapport de Pilate à Tibère*. Unpublished master diss. École pratique des hautes études, Paris.
- (2008), "Témoins manuscrits connus et inconnus du Rapport de Pilate à Tibère (CANT 65 et 66)," *Revue d'études augustiniennes et patristiques* 54: 183–206.
- (2012), *Ponce Pilate: la construction d'une figure dans la littérature patristique et apocryphe*. Unpublished diss. École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris.
- Dubois, Jean-Daniel. (2012), "La figure de Bérénice et ses sources dans la version copte des Actes de Pilate," *Tenth International Congress of Coptic Studies*. Rome, 17–22 September 2012.
- Ehrman, Bart D., and Pleše, Zlatko. (2011), *The Apocryphal Gospels. Texts and Translations*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Furrer, Christiane. (2010), "La recension grecque ancienne des Actes de Pilate," *Apocrypha* 21: 11–30.
- Geerard, Maurice. (1992), *Clavis Apocryphorum Novi Testamenti*. Corpus Christianorum, Turnhout: Brepols.
- Gounelle, Rémi. (2013), "Un nouvel évangile judéo-chrétien? Les Actes de Pilate". *The Apocryphal Gospels within the Context of Early Christian Theology*. Ed. Jens Schröter. Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 260, Leuven: Peeters, 357–402.
- Guzmán Guerra, Antonio. (2011), "Problemas teóricos de la falsificación literaria." *Fakes and forgers of classical literature = Falsificaciones y falsarios de la literatura clásica*. Ed. Javier Martínez, Madrid: Ediciones clásicas, 25–30.

- Harnack, Adolf von. (1892), "Die griechische Übersetzung des Apologeticus Tertullians." *Texte und Untersuchungen* 8.4, Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1–36.
- Lémonon, Jean-Pierre. (1981), *Ponce Pilate*. 2d ed. Paris: éditions de l'Atelier, 2007. rev. ed. of *Pilate et le gouvernement de la Judée: textes et monuments*. Études bibliques, Paris: Gabalda.
- Maraval, Pierre. (1985), *Lieux saints et pèlerinages d'Orient. Histoire et géographie des origines à la conquête arabe*, Paris: Cerf.
- Migne, Jean-Paul. (1858), *Dictionnaire des Apocryphes, ou collection de tous les livres apocryphes relatifs à l'Ancien et au Nouveau Testament, pour la plupart, traduits en français, pour la première fois, sur des textes originaux, enrichie de préfaces, dissertations critiques, notes historiques, bibliographiques, géographiques et théologiques*, vol. 2, Petit Montrouge: J.-P. Migne, 1858.
- Michl, J. (1957–1965), *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*. Ed. Michael Buchberger, Josef Höfer, Karl Rahner. 2d ed. 10 vols., Freiburg: Herder, vol. 8, s.u. «Pilatus», c. 505.
- Sartre, Maurice. (1998), "L'Orient sémitique." *Rome et l'intégration de l'empire, Rome et l'intégration de l'empire*. 44 av. J.-C.—260 apr. J.-C., vol. 2: *Approches régionales du Haut-Empire romain*. Ed. Claude Lepelley, Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 385–433.
- Tsaferis, V. (1972), "Chronique archéologique. Kursi, monastère byzantin," *Revue biblique* 79: 409–411.
- Wilson, John Francis. (2004), *Caesarea Philippi. Baniyas, the Lost City of Pan*, London–New York: I.B. Tauris and Co.

*Virgilius Accuratissimus:*  
The “Authentic” Illustrations  
of William Sandby’s 1750 Virgil

KRISTI EASTIN  
California State University, Fresno

The tradition of abundantly illustrated editions of Virgil’s works dates back to the earliest extant illuminated manuscript, the so-called *Vatican Vergil*, which was made in Rome sometime in the late fourth or early fifth century (c. 370–430).<sup>1</sup> That venerable volume was an expensive, luxury item comprised of 430 folios and lavishly decorated with 280 illustrations, each framed and placed within the text just before the corresponding verse.<sup>2</sup> That abundance of Virgilian imagery was not to be found again until the first illustrated print edition of Virgil’s works, printed by Johann Grüninger in Strasbourg in 1502, under the direction of the humanist Sebastian Brant. This volume contained 214 woodcuts, not for ornamentation or embellishment as with the Vatican Vergil, but to convey in the true spirit of humanism the stories even to those unable to read: “*Virgilium exponant alii sermone disertio. / Et calamo pueris: tradere et ore iuvent. / Pictura agresti voluit Brant: atque tabellis: / Edere eum indoctis: rusticolisque viris*” (Let others explain Virgil in eloquent speech and be pleased to hand him down to boys in written and spoken form; Brant wished to publish him for unlearned and peasant folk in rustic pictures and drawings).<sup>3</sup> Following next in this illustrative tradition is the first illustrated volume of Virgil’s works printed in Britain, *The Works of*

---

<sup>1</sup> MS Vat. Lat. 3225.

<sup>2</sup> Only a fraction of this remarkable volume remains; the surviving leaves consist of seventy-five folios with fifty illustrations from portions of *Georgics* 3 and 4, and *Aeneid* 1–11. For a reconstruction of this manuscript see Wright 1984, 34–36; on this manuscript see Wright 1993, *passim*.

<sup>3</sup> This verse is from a poem by Brant inserted as a colophon to the volume. The impact of the 1502 illustrations is significant: over the next fifty years some fifteen editions of Virgil’s works, from all the major centers of publishing in Europe, contain copies (usually greatly reduced in number) of these pictures.

*Publius Vergilius Maro / Translated, adorned with Sculpture, and / Illustrated with Annotations, / by John Ogilby*, printed “for the author” in London in 1654. Adorned with 103 illustrations, the translator and editor John Ogilby commissioned several of the leading artists working in England to illustrate his opulent volume, which was sold by subscription to wealthy patrons.<sup>4</sup> While each of these three volumes has commanded significant scholarly attention, the subject of this essay is the fourth super-illustrated edition of Virgil works, edited by William Sandby and printed in London in 1750.<sup>5</sup> Sandby’s volume is a Latin edition, and it contains an impressive 165 illustrations. Like Brant and Ogilby before him, the quantity of illustrations is driven by a specific illustrative program, which Sandby articulated clearly in the volume’s subtitle: *Bucolica, Georgica et Aeneis, Illustrata, ornata, et accuratissime impressa*. Whereas Brant wished to provide edification and Ogilby to present opulence, Sandby sought to convey authenticity. As such, the edition is “ornamented” not with visual translations of Virgil’s poems but instead with a wealth of engraved copies of artifacts such as coins, gems, statues, friezes, and monuments from antiquity.

This illustrative agenda is an innovative contribution to Virgilian illustration, and it reflects the appeal of antiquarianism in eighteenth-century Britain. Published just when King George II granted an official charter to the Society of Antiquaries (1751), Sandby’s volume was in tune with the antiquarian tastes of many among the British elite. The dedicatee was of the royal household: the young Edward, Duke of York, the second son of Frederick, Prince of Wales, son of George II. Sandby had published an illustrated volume of Horace in the same vein the previous year, dedicated to the first son of the Prince of Wales, eleven year old George (later George III), and the preface of his Virgil, which begins, “*En, tibi promissam Virgilii Editionem...*” (Behold, the edition of Virgil promised to you...), suggests that Sandby had promised a similar treasure to the younger son.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The illustrator was Francis Cleyn (c. 1590–1658); the engravings are by Wenceslaus Hollar (1607–1677), Pierre Lombart (c. 1620–1681), Ludwig Richer (active 17<sup>th</sup> century), and William Faithorne (1616–1691), all men once associated with the Stuart court. The illustrations were a great success, and Ogilby issued two Latin editions (1658 and 1663), and a second English edition in 1668. The plates were then sold to Jacob Tonson, who would reuse them to accompany the long-awaited translation by John Dryden, first published in 1697 and reissued in 1698 and 1709.

<sup>5</sup> *Publii Virgilii Maronis Bucolica, Georgica, et Aeneis, Illustrata, ornate, et accuratissime impressa*; a large octavo published in two volumes by John and Paul Knapton and William Sandby, with plates by Johann Sebastian Müller (c. 1715–c. 1790), Charles Grignion (1716–1810), J. Bonneau (active 18<sup>th</sup> century), and Samuel Wale (1721?–1786). A smaller illustrated two-volume octavo was also issued in the same year (Cohen 1912, 596).

<sup>6</sup> Virgil’s poems are preceded by Charles de la Rue’s *Historia descripta per consules* by and also a preface—*Lectori Benevolo*—by Sandby. Sandby’s connection to the Prince of

The two volumes are similar in illustrative approach, each using images of ancient artifacts to adorn the poems, but the Virgil edition contains nearly four times as many illustrations, and, with its boldly stated claims to accuracy—*illustrata, ornata, et accuratissime impressa* (not present in the Horace volume)—it is clearly defined by its antiquarian appeal. Additionally, whereas Sandby was unassisted in publishing the Horace edition, his Virgil was published as a joint enterprise with the printers John and Paul Knapton. This may have been merely a financial decision, but it would not have been lost on Sandby that George Knapton, a brother of the printers who occasionally assisted with their print ventures, was a founding member of and also the portraitist for the Dilettanti Society, an exclusive dining club founded on the loose principles of disseminating “proper taste”—viz., an appreciation of classical antiquities and art in that style—in Britain.<sup>7</sup> The Dilettanti and their associates would have been the ideal target audience for Sandby’s Virgil, and George Knapton was the perfect publicist.<sup>8</sup>

Though touting the most accurate text and scholarly analysis, it is the illustrations that make Sandby’s volume remarkable.<sup>9</sup> Copper engravings of 163 ancient artifacts are arranged on fifty-six plates, as single illustrations (Fig. 1) or in tables with anywhere from two to six individual images (Fig. 2). The plates are somewhat sporadically arranged throughout the three poems: five plates for the *Eclogues*, ten for the *Georgics*, and 41 throughout the *Aeneid*. A frontispiece with busts of Theocritus, Hesiod, and Homer introduces the volume, and a plate with a portrait of young Edward and a short address follows the title page. A key component of this illustrated volume is Sandby’s *Tabularum Explicatio*, a descriptive list of the illustrations organized by plate. Most importantly in terms of illustration, it is here that Sandby connects image to verse, citing the line(s) of

---

Wales is not clear, but these volumes suggest that Frederick himself took an interest in antiquaries, as is also evidenced by his close association with members of the Dilettanti Society discussed below.

<sup>7</sup> On the Dilettanti, see Redford 2008, *passim*; Knapton was also a portraitist for the Prince of Wales (Redford 2008, 199).

<sup>8</sup> Though not a formal member, the Prince of Wales had close connections with the Dilettanti: Sir Francis Dashwood and Charles Sackville, Earl of Middlesex were both associated with his household, and Daniel Boone was a personal friend, and several men who belonged to the dining society over which Frederick presided (“The Harry the Fifth”) were also Dilettanti (Cust 1898, 9–16; 28).

<sup>9</sup> Sandby addresses the text briefly in his preface: “...sanissimas ex optima fidei codicibus, Romano praesertim et Mediceo, deligere, id sedulo praestare volumus,” but the majority of his comments focus on the volume’s unique illustrations.



Figure 1. Plate XVIII. The Death of Orpheus (*Georgics* 4). *Publii Virgilii Maronis Bucolica, Georgica, et Aeneis, Illustrata, ornate, et accuratissime impressa*, ed. William Sandby (London, 1750). Private Collection.

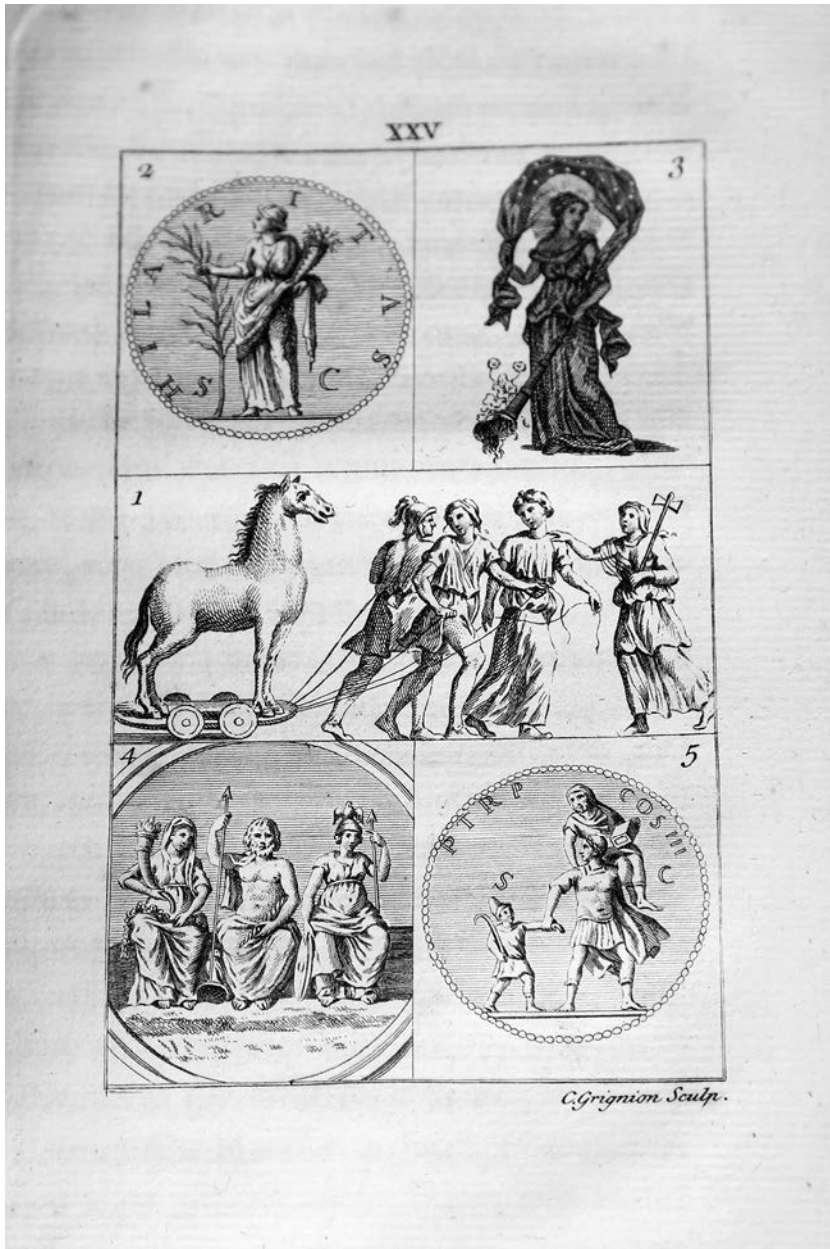


Figure 2. Plate XXV. [1] The Trojan Horse [2] Hilaritas [3] Nox [4] Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva [5] The Flight from Troy (*Aeneid* 2). *Publii Virgilii Maronis Bucolica, Georgica, et Aeneis, Illustrata, ornate, et accuratissime impressa*, ed. William Sandby (London, 1750). Private Collection.

Virgil's poem that corresponds to the artifact, and, as we shall see, the lack of proximity between verse and image renders these line citations indispensable. The *Tabularum Explicatio* also allowed Sandby to add, on occasion, his own commentary, explicating the image or the passage or some related aspect of the ancient world. And equally important for Sandby's illustrative agenda is the inclusion of a source for each image. Whether citing a well-known secondary authority, such as the multivolume works of Antonio Francesco Gori (*Museum Florentium*) or Bernard de Montfaucon (*L'antiquité expliquée et représentée en figures*), or primary sources, such as the Columns of Trajan or of Marcus Aurelius, the citations serve to authenticate the image, confirming the accuracy promised by the volume's title.<sup>10</sup> As Sandby articulates in his preface, one could now imagine the poems "with accuracy," using the authority of the ancient images:

[Editio] verum etiam multis eruditae Antiquitatis monumentis, nummis, signis, gemmis, tabulis, locupletatur. Quanta horum vis fit ad illustrandas veterum consuetudines, ritus, religiones, neminem latet; neque quanta cum delectatione et profectu, divorum heroumque vultus, vestitum, arma, recognoscimus.

[The edition], indeed, is also enriched by many monuments, coins, seals, gems, and pictures of the learned ancients. How great the power of these becomes for illustrating the customs, rituals, and religions of the ancients is lost on no one; nor with how much delight and success we recognize the faces, clothing, and arms of the gods and heroes.

Though the citations in the *Tabularum Explicatio* reveal that there were numerous antiquarian volumes of coins and gems and statues through which one could authentically visualize the ancient world, this collection of artifacts, even if only a paper museum, was validated by the *auctoritas* of Virgil.

<sup>10</sup> All of the illustrations in the Virgil are copied from secondary sources; Sandby's use of primary source citations is a way of authenticating the accuracy of his choices, as discussed below. Gori's *Museum Florentinum* (1731–1742) and Montfaucon's *L'antiquité expliquée et représentée en figures* (1719; 1724) are Sandby's two main sources, though there are many others (see appendix). The *Museum Florentinum* was published in six volumes (vols. 1–2, *Gemmae Antiquae*; vol. 3, *Statuae Antiquae*; vols. 4–6, *Antiqua Numismata*); Montfaucon's *L'antiquité* is five volumes, each of two books (10 vols; 1719), plus a five volume *Supplément* (1724), with each book treating an ancient topic (vs. type of artifact), e.g., *Les dieux des Grecs & des Romains* (vol. 1), *Les usages de la vie: Les habites, les meubles, les vases, les monoyes, les poids, les mesures, des Grecs, des Romains, & des autres nations* (vol. 3), or *La guerre, les voitures, les grands chemins, les ponts, les aqueducs, la navigation: Les chemins publics, les aqueducs, & la navigation* (vol. 4).



Sandby's inspiration, it seems, was Joseph Spence, an English clergyman and scholar, and a member of the Dilettanti. In 1747 Spence published a large, copiously illustrated volume entitled, *Polymetis: or an Enquiry concerning the agreement between the Works of the Roman Poets and the Remains of the Antient Artists—Being an Attempt to illustrate them mutually from one another*.<sup>11</sup> The similarities between the illustrative programs are obvious: Spence's volume is filled with plates of coins, statues, gems, and such, and also a list of the antiquities and their sources (many which are also found in Sandby's Virgil); and like Spence, Sandby emphasizes in his *Lectori Benevolo* the relationship between ancient word and image:

*Porro, ipsa Poetae cum artifice comparatio, elegantioris ingenii hominibus, nec inutilis erit, nec injucunda... Erit profecto voluptas non exigua, artem cum arte, poetam cum pictore, utrumque cum Natura conferre.*

Moreover, a comparison of the poet with the artifact itself, for men of a more refined genius, will be neither unprofitable nor unpleasant... It will surely be no small pleasure to compare skill with skill, poet with picture, and each with Nature.

The two editors diverge, nevertheless, in the application or use of illustration. *Polymetis*, though meditating on classical scholarship in general, is essentially a treatise on ancient myth, and Spence uses the images to illustrate his own scholarly investigation, picking and choosing artifacts accordingly. Sandby's task, however, is more complex. His artifacts must work necessarily as visual translations of the Latin poem, illustrating for readers the words of Virgil. For example, whereas an ancient gem depicting a statue of Juno is quite successful in Spence's entry on that deity, the same image used to illustrate her wrathful injunction to the wind god Aeolus (*Aeneid* 1) does not have the same effect.<sup>12</sup> Yet despite our strict illustrative expectations, the images do, as Sandby promised, most accurately adorn the text.

The majority of the illustrations work in conjunction with Virgil's poems in the form of a visual commentary, supplying, for the reader, a properly visualized ancient world. When, for example, Virgil recounts the death of the Trojan trumpeter, Misenus, who, daring to challenge the gods in rival song, was killed by

<sup>11</sup> Spence's edition was quite popular, and he had issued four editions by 1777.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Suerbaum (2008, 518): "Die Tafeln, die meist mehrere Teile haben, bieten keine Textillustration, sondern von verschiedenen Künstlern stammende Kupferstiche von antiken Münzen, Medaillen, Gemmen, ... [etc.]."

Triton (6.171–174), Sandby supplies “*Triton concha personans*” (Triton trumpeting with a shell) (Fig. 3, no. 2), an authentic vision of the jealous god (*TE* XXXIV.2).<sup>13</sup> On this same plate is a funerary urn (no. 3) (“*Urna funebris*” (Funeral urn) *TE* XXXIV.3), an accurate image for use in visualizing the ossuary for Misenus (6.228). At the top of the plate (no. 1) is “*Orpheus cithara fretus Cerberum adit*” (Relying on his cithara, Orpheus draws out Cerberus) (*TE* XXXIV.1), a scene that permits the reader to imagine properly the myth to which Aeneas alludes: *si potuit manis accersere conjugis Orpheus* (If Orpheus was able to summon his wife’s shade) (6.119). While these images do not illustrate the poem per se, this “visual commentary” does enhance our ability to picture the poem with images that more closely reflect Virgil’s world.

As these examples show, Sandby’s illustrative commentary falls mostly into two categories: artifacts depicting mythical figures (gods and heroes) and their stories, and artifacts relating to the material culture of ancient Rome. Not surprisingly (for illustrations of Virgil), the majority of the images fall into the first category. A plate from the first book of the *Aeneid*, for example, supplies in a series of five coins authentic images of Juno, the Parcae, Diana, Neptune, and the city of Carthage (“*num. Punic.*,” *TE* XXI.4).<sup>14</sup> So too, the frontispiece for Book 6, where ancient gems portray Daedalus crafting a wing, a labyrinth with the Minotaur, and Icarus in flight; and the Sibyl is figured by an ancient statue (Fig. 4).<sup>15</sup> The volume contains numerous artifacts depicting Hercules (a fact not surprising considering his popularity in the ancient world), and nearly every reference to the hero finds a corresponding illustration. Yet while the multiplicity of Hercules illustrations may grow a bit redundant, many of Sandby’s less familiar inclusions, such as a coin depicting the goddess Feronia (...*et viridi gaudens Feronia luco* [and Feronia rejoicing in her green grove], 7.800), a frieze of Anubis (*latrator Anubis* [barking Anubis], 8.698), or the curious—though authentic—image of Jupiter Pluvius from the column of Marcus Aurelius (Fig. 5) (...*cum Iuppiter horridus Austris / torquet aquosam hiemem et caelo cava nubila rumpit* [...when Jupiter, horrible with south winds, twists the watery storm, and bursts the hollow clouds in the sky] 9.670–671) may delight and supply grist for even the modern imagination.<sup>16</sup> Occasionally the illustration also serves as explication, as when a coin depicting Hero and Leander illustrates a passage from the

<sup>13</sup> References to specific illustrations from Sandby’s volume are cited by plate: as here, Pl. XXXIV; commentary by Sandby from the *Tabularum Explicatio* is also cited by plate number (as referenced in the *Tabularum*), as here, *TE* XXXIV.1, etc.

<sup>14</sup> Pl. XXI.

<sup>15</sup> Pl. XXXIII.

<sup>16</sup> Feronia, Pl. XXXIX; Anubis, Pl. XLIX; Jupiter Pluvius, Pl. LIII.

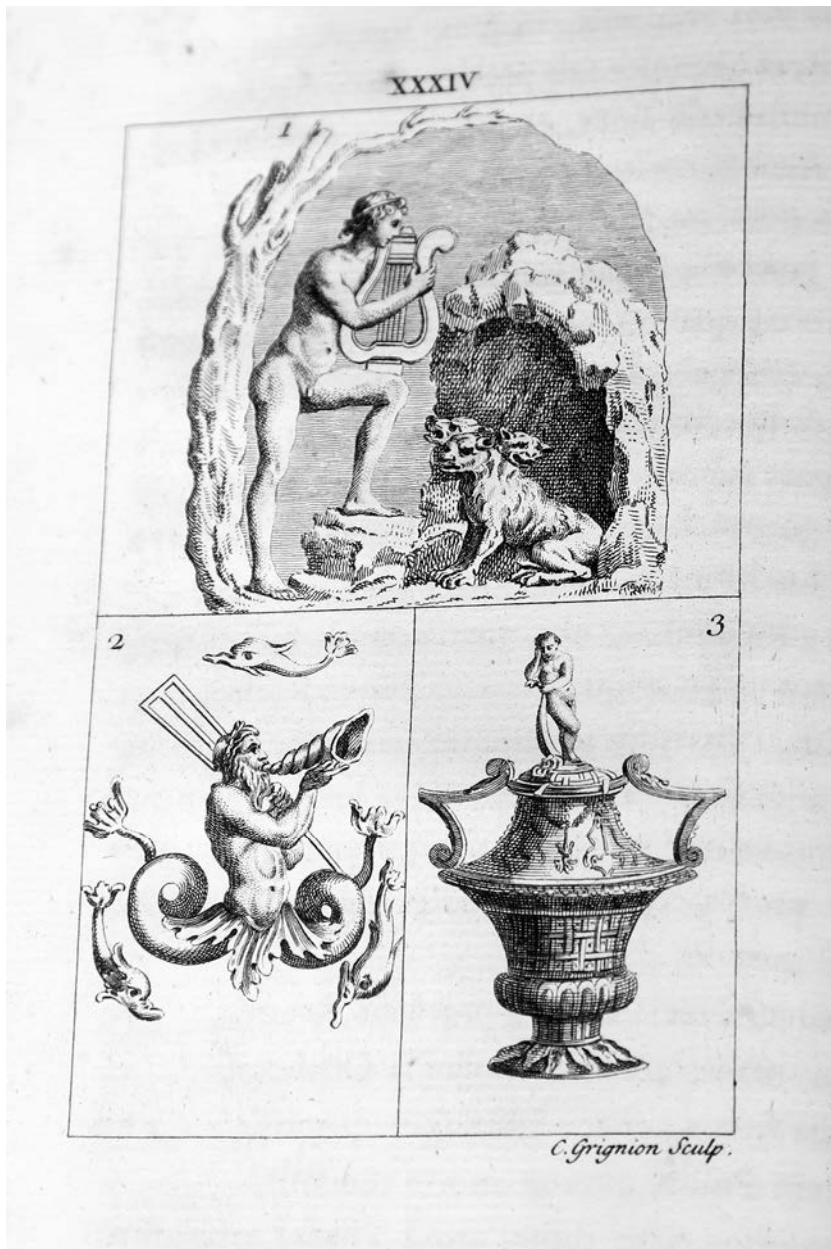


Figure 3. Plate XXXIV. [1] Orpheus summons Cerberus [2] Triton trumpeting [3] Funerary Urn (*Aeneid* 6). *Publii Virgilii Maronis Bucolica, Georgica, et Aeneis, Illustrata, ornate, et accuratissime impressa*, ed. William Sandby (London, 1750). Private Collection.

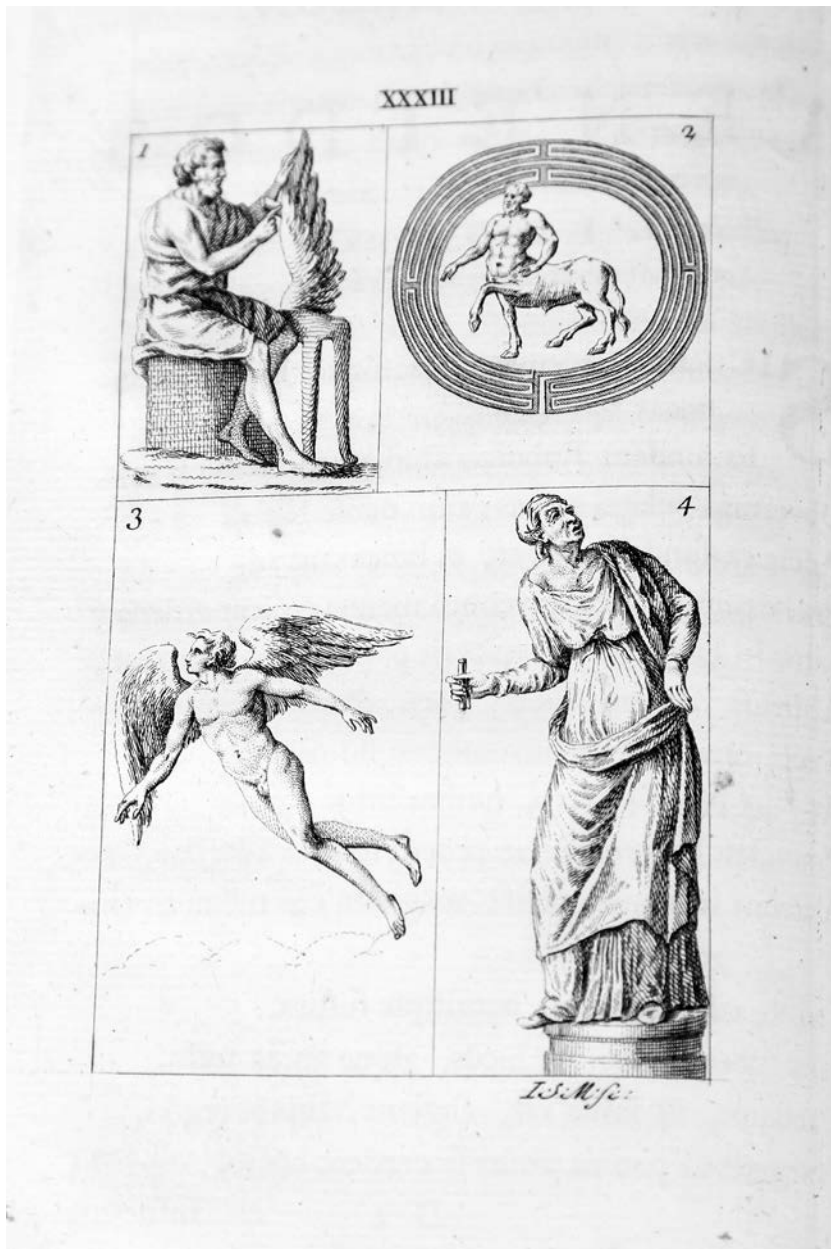


Figure 4. Plate XXXIII. [1] Daedalus making a wing [2] The Minotaur in a labyrinth [3] Icarus flying [4] The Sybil (*Aeneid* 6). *Publii Virgilii Maronis Bucolica, Georgica, et Aeneis, Illustrata, ornate, et accuratissime impressa*, ed. William Sandby (London, 1750). Private Collection.

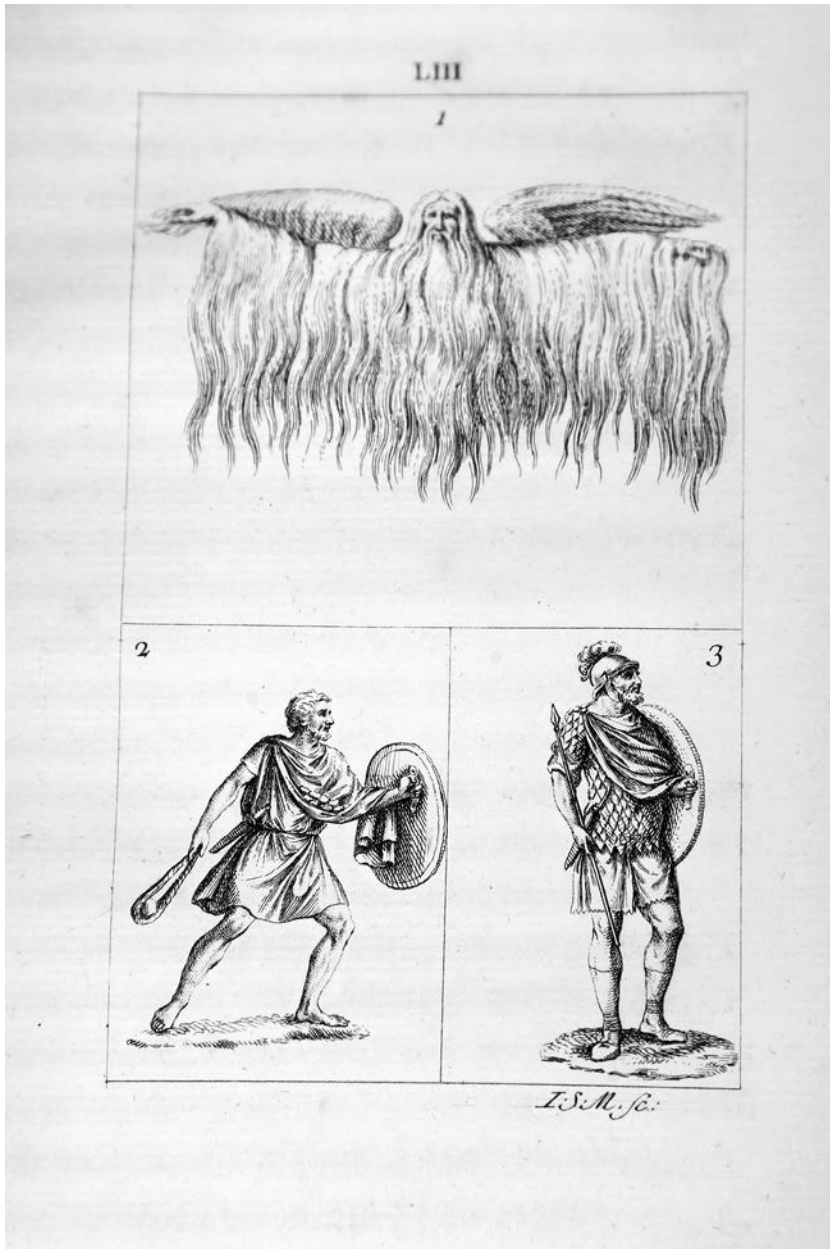


Figure 5. Plate LIII. [1] Jupiter Pluvius [2] Soldier with a sling [3] Soldier with a metal cuirass (*Aeneid* 9). *Publii Virgilii Maronis Bucolica, Georgica, et Aeneis, Illustrata, ornate, et accuratissime impressa*, ed. William Sandby (London, 1750). Private Collection.

*Georgics: quid iuvenis, magnum cui versat in ossibus ignem / durus amor?* (What of the young man in whose bones hard love churns the great flame?) (*G.*3.258–259).<sup>17</sup> In this instance, the artifact provides a visual glossary for Virgil's obscure allusion.

As shown by the urn in Figure 3, many of the illustrations function as historical commentary, providing accurate images of material culture. In Figure 5 we see the Roman sling (“*Miles cum funda*” [Soldier with a sling] *TE* LIII.2) and scale-armor (“*Miles loricated cum squamis*” [Soldier wearing a cuirass with metal plates] *TE* LIII.3). A plate from *Aeneid* I illustrating the verse *mecumque fovebit / Romanos, rerum dominos, gentemque togatam* [and cherish with me the Romans, masters of affairs, and the tribe that wears the toga] (281–282) uses statues to show four different styles of ancient togas.<sup>18</sup> For “accurate” portraits of historical figures, Sandby employs coins: the “Parade of Heroes” shown to Aeneas in the underworld is illustrated with copies of coins depicting Numa, Ancus, and Brutus; coins portraying Augustus, Agrippa, and Antony and Cleopatra furnish our imagination with authentic characters for the battle of Actium in *Aeneid* 8.<sup>19</sup> There is one instance, however, where the illustrations do not guide our imagination but serve instead to enhance our literary acumen. In the plate corresponding to *Eclogue* 5, the imagery works to connect the literary figure of Daphnis to the historical Julius Caesar (Fig.6): a portrait of Caesar with a crown of laurel associates the two figures (1); the coin with the *pileus* flanked by two daggers and the inscription EID MAR (2) represents *extinctum...crudeli funere Daphnim* (Daphnis, extinguished by cruel death) (5.20); and the apotheosis of Daphnis is illustrated with a gem depicting the apotheosis of Caesar (4).<sup>20</sup> Here Sandby's selections do not provide an authentic vision of ancient pastoral but rather guidance for an accurate reading—and indeed a more authentic understanding of the poem.

The volume has been criticized for privileging artifact over illustration, and there are, admittedly, some poor illustrative choices.<sup>21</sup> For example, the passage when Dido, raving madly when she discovers the harbor empty of Trojan ships,

<sup>17</sup> Pl. XIV.

<sup>18</sup> Pl. XXIX.

<sup>19</sup> Pl. XXXVIII (The parade of heroes); Pl. XLIX (The shield of Aeneas).

<sup>20</sup> Pl. V.

<sup>21</sup> cf. Odermann: “Die Bilder, im ganzen 58, sind ausschließlich in Tafelform eingefügt und stellen, ziemlich unregelmäßig über beide Bände verstreut, als wissenschaftliches Beiwerk zum Text antike Münzen und Gemmen (diese besonders zahlreich) Miniaturen, Statuen usw., öfters mit nur sehr vager Beziehung zum Dichter, nebeneinander,” (in Suerbaum 2008, 517).

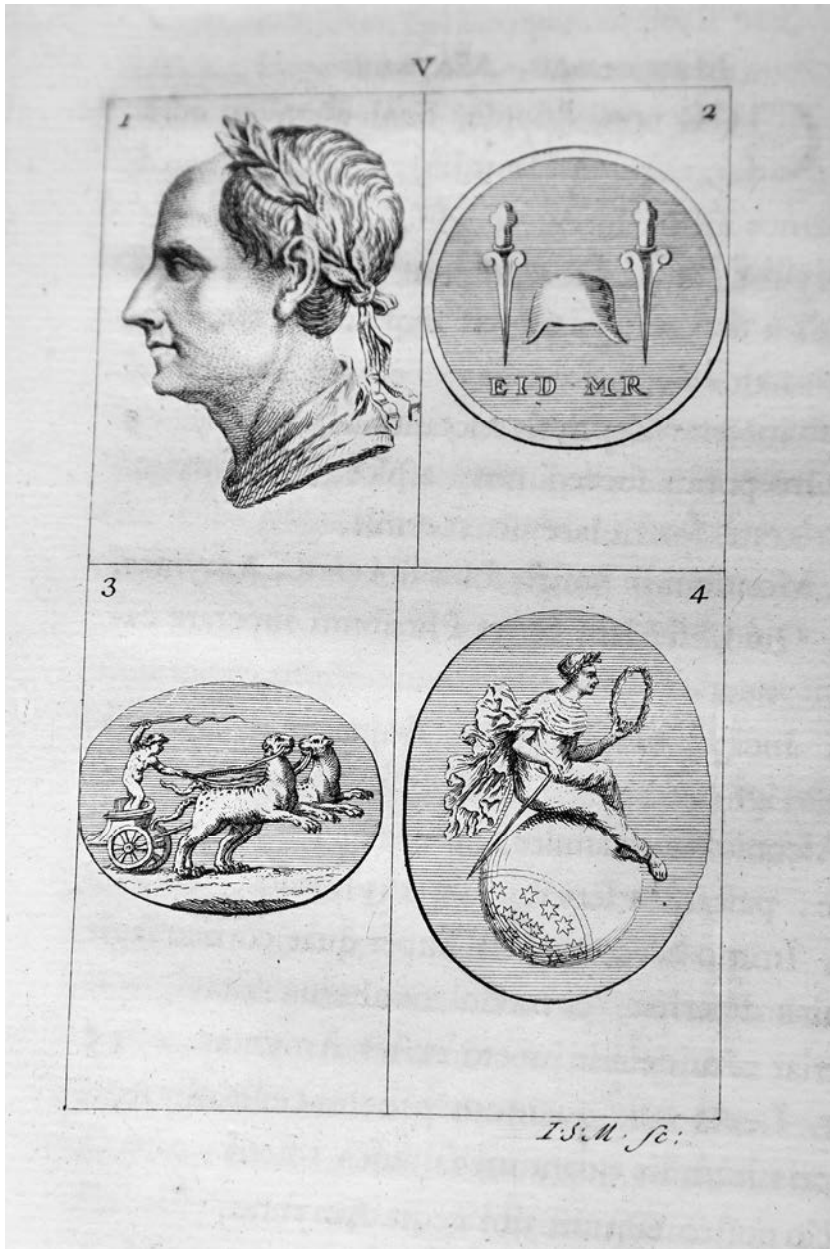


Figure 6. Plate V. [1] Julius Caesar [2] Coin with the *pilius* and two daggers [3] Bacchus pulled by tigers [4] The apotheosis of Julius Caesar (*Eclogue* 5). *Publii Virgilii Maronis Bucolica, Georgica, et Aeneis, Illustrata, ornate, et accuratissime impressa*, ed. William Sandby (London, 1750). Private Collection.

angrily recalls the pledge Aeneas gave—*en dextra fidesque* (behold his pledge and fidelity) (4.597)—is vividly illustrated by a coin depicting a handshake. Sandby's dry commentary for this illustration, "*Fidei Symbolum*," (A symbol of faith) does nothing to supply the lost passion.<sup>22</sup> Yet such poor choices are notably few, and, in fact, within the volume there are numerous artifacts that function as successful illustrations. Several images in this category require no close analysis because the "artifacts" are, literally, Virgilian illustrations. Sandby included nine "authentic" illustrations that are simply scenes copied from the earliest extant illuminated manuscript of Virgil's poems, the *Vatican Vergil* mentioned above. Engravings of the surviving pictures and fragments from this manuscript had been made by the Italian painter and engraver Pietro Santi Bartoli and published as a collection.<sup>23</sup> Though Sandby includes only nine of these pictures, he makes much of them in his preface, which he concludes with a lengthy quotation on the antique manuscript by Emmanuel Schelestrate, the former assistant librarian to the Vatican under Pope Innocent IX, whose commentary on the authenticity of these images serves to further augment Sandby's illustrative claims.<sup>24</sup> Many of the original illustrations have been cropped to highlight a specific character (and also to permit a greater number of pictures per plate), but it is the manuscript itself—the most ancient illustrated Virgil—that grants these images their authority. The illustrations are authentic because of their source. This authenticity is further emphasized by Sandby in the *Tabularum Explicatio*, where he cites not "Bartoli" (as elsewhere), but the manuscript itself ("*e Cod. Vat.*").<sup>25</sup>

In addition to the *Vatican Vergil* illustrations, there are several artifacts with pictures that so closely correspond to the poem that they readily serve as conventional illustrations. A coin depicting the "Flight from Troy" (2.707–725) (Fig. 2, no. 5) and a vignette from a tomb that shows Cassandra confronting the Trojans as they happily conduct the Trojan horse (2.246–247) (Fig. 2, no. 1) are both images that may well be scenes derived from the poem itself.<sup>26</sup> In Figure 1, the

<sup>22</sup> Pl. XXIX.

<sup>23</sup> *Antiquissimi Virgiliani codicis fragmenta et picturae ex Bibliotheca Vaticana: ad priscas imaginum formas a Petro Sancte Bartholi incisae*, (1677); the volume was reissued in 1741.

<sup>24</sup> Schelestrate's quotation concludes: "*Quinimo pictor harum imaginum videtur secutus fuisse ideam nobilioris et antiquioris pictoris; nihilque in iis exhibetur, quod primam Romani imperii majestatem non redoleat*" (Indeed, the painter of these images seems to have followed the idea of a more noble and more ancient painter; and nothing in these is shown, which does not suggest the noble grandeur of the Roman Empire), *Lectori Benevolo*.

<sup>25</sup> Sandby also implies in the preface that these illustrations were copied directly from the manuscript: "*Et hoc quidem facile constabit ex picturis, quas e Cod. Vat. delineatas in medium protulimus,...*"

<sup>26</sup> Pl. XXV.



haunting image of the death of Orpheus (taken from a marble relief) captures powerfully the poet's graphic description of this moment in the *Georgics*: *discerptum latos iuvenem sparsere per agros* (ripped the youth into pieces and sprinkled him over the wide plain) (*G.4.522*).<sup>27</sup> Another excellent illustration is the frontispiece to *Aeneid* 2, which contains the single image of the Laocöon Group statue—a vivid depiction of the poet's description of the tragic death of the priest and his sons.<sup>28</sup>

Each of these images is easily accessible as "illustration," and they immediately take the reader to a specific Virgilian scene. But there are a significant number of images that while at first blush may seem mere commentary are, upon closer consideration, actually effective illustrations of the Latin verse. Three plates from the *Aeneid* provide good examples. Figure 7 is a gem copied from Gori's *Museum Florentinum*, depicting (according to Gori) "*Achilles in praelium revertens*" (Achilles returning to battle).<sup>29</sup> Sandby uses this image to illustrate the brothers Lucagus and Liger, whom Aeneas, crazed with anger, slaughters in Book 10 (*A.10.575–601*). The explanatory note in the *Tabularum Explicatio* is a rather mundane explanation of the image: "*Bellatores duo in curru, quorum unus equos flectit, alter pugnat*" (Two warriors in a chariot, one of which guides the horses, the other fights) (*TE LVI*). But if one considers the image together with the passage to which Sandby directs his reader, the image comes to life:

*Interea biiugis infert se Lucagus albis  
in medios fraterque Liger; sed frater habenis  
flectit equos, strictum rotat acer Lucagus ensem. (575–577)*

Meanwhile, with his yoked white horses Lucagus drives himself and his brother Liger into the midst; but his brother guides the horses with reins, while fierce Lucagus whirls his drawn sword.

When word and image are experienced together, the scene on the artifact evokes all the pathos of the poem, as the characters before us transform from sterile *bellatores* to two young brothers riding forth in all their glory about to meet their doom. The second example, though somewhat problematic, also shows well how easy it is to overlook the illustrative successes in this volume. Figure 8 is a scene reproduced from the column of Marcus Aurelius ("*e Column Antonin.*" *TE LII*),

<sup>27</sup> Pl. XVII.

<sup>28</sup> Pl. XXIV.

<sup>29</sup> Vol. 2, Table XXVI; in Sandby, Pl. LVI.



Figure 7. Plate LVI. "Lucagus and Liger" (*Aeneid* 10). *Publii Virgilii Maronis Bucolica, Georgica, et Aeneis, Illustrata, ornatè, et accuratissime impressa*, ed. William Sandby (London, 1750). Private Collection.

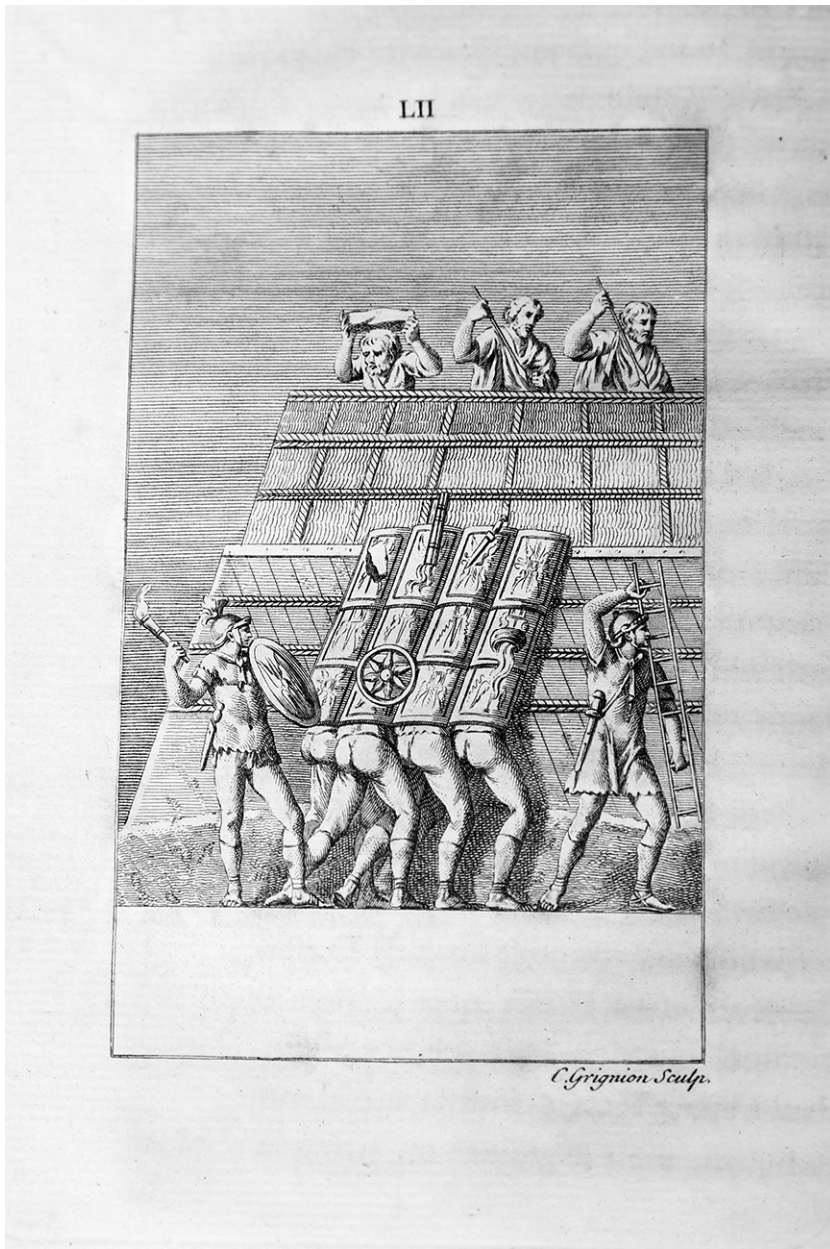


Figure 8. Plate LII. Testudo formation (*Aeneid* 9). *Publii Virgilii Maronis Bucolica, Georgica, et Aeneis, Illustrata, ornate, et accuratissime impressa*, ed. William Sandby (London, 1750). Private Collection.

depicting the military formation known as the *testudo*, referenced by Virgil in Book 9.<sup>30</sup> The visual explication of *testudo* was likely most useful to Sandby's eighteenth-century audience (serving as visual commentary), yet when considered with the poem, the picture becomes a fine illustration of the Virgilian scene:

*Accelerant acta pariter testudine Volsci  
et fossas implere parant ac vellere vallum;  
quaerunt pars adytum et scalis ascendere muros,  
qua rara est acies interlucetque corona  
non tam spissa viris. Telorum effundere contra  
omne genus Teucris ac duris detrudere contis,  
adsueti longo muros defendere bello.* (505–511)

A *testudo* being formed, the Volscians hasten together, and they prepare to fill the ditches and pull down the wall; part seek access and to ascend the walls with ladders, where the battle line is thin and the circumvallation, not so thick with men, lets the light through. In turn, the Teucrians cast forth every kind of missile and they drive them off with rigid pikes, accustomed to defend the walls in a drawn-out war.

Once again word and image combined transform an explanatory illustration into a dynamic battle scene. Generic *milites* become Volscians and Trojans (Virgilian anachronisms to be sure), each striving with the greatest commitment to attack or defend the Trojan camp. This second example—complete with “*miles cum face: miles cum scala: milites muros defendentes*” (soldier with a torch; soldier with a ladder; soldiers defending the walls) (*TE* LII)—is suspiciously accurate, and further investigation reveals that there is, in fact, no “*miles cum scala*” in the *testudo* vignette on the ancient column. The scene on the column of Marcus Aurelius is comprised of two groups of four men in the *testudo* formation; in Sandby's illustration, the group on the right has been replaced by a soldier holding a ladder. Did Sandby, in this instance, privilege illustration over authenticity? Not entirely. The image of the *miles cum scala* can be found in a battle scene on Trajan's column, and it has been excerpted for use here.<sup>31</sup> Sandby's composite image is technically still “authentic” (i.e. from two primary sources), and it reveals that the editor was not above modest alterations if they would increase the “accuracy” of the illustration.

<sup>30</sup> Pl. LII.

<sup>31</sup> Bartoli's *Columna Antoniniana* (1672) and *Colonna Traiana* (1673) are likely Sandby's sources for these two images; see Pl. 36 and Pl. 86 respectively.

All of these examples suggest that the illustrations in this volume are much more dynamic than they first seem. There are poor illustrative choices, it is true, and there is some mundane visual commentary, but if we consider them as Sandby must have (choosing artifacts that correspond to Virgil's verse) then the artifacts become effective and, in their own various ways, accurate illustrations of the poem. Let us examine one final example of the transformative power of word and image. Figure 9 is the frontispiece to *Aeneid* 8.<sup>32</sup> Of the four images, only the third appears to directly illustrate the story, depicting Aeneas's arrival in Italy and the prophesied white sow with her brood. The other images all function as visual commentary, supplying the reader with an accurate mythical or historical vision. Sandby's descriptive notes (as is typical) augment these visions:

F.1 *Imperatore adstante, buccinator classicum canens.*

With the commander standing by, a trumpeter sounds the field signal.

F.2 *Tyberin. fluvius.*

The Tiber River.

F.3 *Aeneas ad litus navem appellens, porcam cum porcellis videt.*

Landing his ship on the shore, Aeneas sees a pig with piglets.

F.4 *Legati duo cum ramis oleae, pacem petentes.*

Two legates with olive branches, seeking peace.

When considered with the editorial comments, even the picture with Aeneas and the sow becomes somewhat dull. Yet for each artifact Sandby has also guided his reader to a specific verse or passage, and the effect of reading the poem with the picture, though it requires work on the part of the reader, is remarkable. Consider, if you will, each of the pictures again, this time in conjunction with the following captions:

[no. 1] *Ut belli signum Laurenti Turnus ab arce  
extulit et rauco strepuerunt cornua cantu (1–2)*

When Turnus raised the standard of war from the fortress of the Laurentines and the trumpets roared with their harsh song.

[no. 2] *Huic deus ipse loci fluvio Tiberinus amoeno  
populeas inter senior se attollere frondes  
visus. (31–33)*

To him the god of the place himself, aged Tiberinus, seemed to bear himself up by the gentle river among the poplar leaves.

<sup>32</sup> Pl. XLII.



Figure 9. Plate XLII. [1] Military commander and trumpeter [2] The Tiber river [3] Aeneas arrives in Italy [4] Legates seeking peace (*Aeneid* 8). *Publii Virgilii Maronis Bucolica, Georgica, et Aeneis, Illustrata, ornate, et accuratissime impressa*, ed. William Sandby (London, 1750). Private Collection.

[no. 3] *Litoreis ingens inventa sub ilicibus sus  
triginta capitum fetus enixa iacebit  
alba solo recubans, albi circum ubera nati* (43–45)

Thou find a huge sow under the shoreline oaks, having born a litter of thirty heads, she, white, will lie reclining on the ground, her white offspring around her teats.

[no. 4] *Tum pater Aeneas puppi sic fatur ab alta  
paciferaeque manu ramum praetendit olivae.* (115–116)

Then father Aeneas from the high stern speaks thus and with his hand offers a branch of peaceful olive.

Now the pictures come alive. In the first Turnus issues commands while his trumpeter signals battle; in the second we see not a descriptive “*Tiberinus fluvius*” but the actual being—the very god himself! The third reveals the prophecy of the river god, supplying imagery for his words, and in the final picture we see Aeneas and another Trojan offering Pallas a branch of peace.

The power of reading word together with the corresponding image is best demonstrated by the single artifact in the volume that is accompanied by a caption. The frontispiece to the *Georgics* (Fig. 10) is an illustration of an ancient sacrifice.<sup>33</sup> There is a reference to sacrificing a goat in Book 2 (*non aliam ob culpam Baccho caper omnibus aris / caeditur* [on account of no other crime is the goat slain for Bacchus on every altar], G.2.380f.), but the picture itself does not correspond to any specific Virgilian scene. Nevertheless, when considered with the verse caption below the picture—*fortunatus et ille, deos qui novit agrestis* (and fortunate is that man who knows the country gods) (2.493)—the image becomes a moving visual translation of one of the didactic poem’s most important themes: the enviable happiness born of simple rustic piety. According to the *Tabularum Explicatio*, this picture depicts an ancient sacrifice to the god Pan, and in his editorial comments Sandby takes pains in a lengthy entry to describe in detail all of the elements of the illustration that pertain to the ancient ritual, emphasizing, in accordance with the caption, its simplicity: “*Simplicitatem religionis agrestium apte declarat*” (It aptly depicts the simplicity of the religion of the rustics) (*TE* VIII). However, this is mere pedantic detail when compared with the way in which, with the verse caption, this scene (found nowhere in the *Georgics*) becomes a powerful illustration of the poem.

<sup>33</sup> Pl. VIII.



Figure 10. Plate VIII. Sacrifice honoring Pan (*Georgics*). *Publii Virgilii Maronis Bucolica, Georgica, et Aeneis, Illustrata, ornatè, et accuratissime impressa*, ed. William Sandby (London, 1750). Private Collection.



It is notable that for this illustration Sandby seems to have purposely misquoted his source. According to the *Tabularum Explicatio*, the image was copied from Montfaucon's *L'antiquité expliquée et représentée en figures*, a 15-volume investigation of the lives and customs of the Greeks and Romans, as evidenced by artifacts from antiquity. The illustration can indeed be found in the second *Supplement*, entitled *Le culte des Grecs, des Romains, des Egyptiens, et des Gaulois / Cultus graecorum, romanorum, aegyptiorum, atque gallorum*, in a chapter which explores in painstaking detail the conventions of ancient sacrifice. Thus, as above, the accuracy of Sandby's illustration is further bolstered by the authority of his erudite source. But Montfaucon's illustration does not include the Virgilian caption. The source of this image for both of these volumes is not a scholarly edition but *Pierres antiques gravées tirées des principaux cabinets de la France*, a collection of prints for display (with no commentary) published by the French painter Élisabeth Sophie Chéron. Here the engraving includes both the source for the image ("*Cornaline du Cabinet de Mrs. Masson*") and also the caption. Montfaucon removes the caption but leaves the source; Sandby includes the caption, but cites Montfaucon as a more authoritative and accurate source. The point is further emphasized by the fact that Sandby includes several prints from Chéron's collection, but he never cites her volume. For these illustrations (which were not used by Montfaucon or another scholarly authority) the authenticity of the artifact is verified by the *auctoritas* of its owner: "*in Museo serenissimi Regis Gall.*" (TE IV, XXVII.4, XLIV, and XLVI.3) or "*Mus. viri clarissimi Dom. de Bortaloue*" (TE XIX). We see this same slight-of-hand in Sandby's use of primary sources, where the accuracy of the illustration is better authenticated by the artifact itself. An illustration, for example, of "*Juvenis in Elysio*" (A youth in Elysium) corresponding to the revelations of Anchises in the underworld (*ille, vides, pura iuvenis qui nititur hasta* [that youth, you see, who leans on a headless spear], 6.760), is made still more accurate (if not more compelling) by a direct reference to the primary source: "*ex sepulch. Nas.*" (TE XXXVII). Behold an actual scene from Ovid's tomb!<sup>34</sup> Likewise the illustration of the *testudo* in Figure 8 ("*e Column. Antonin.*"), and also both soldiers in Figure 5 ("*e Column. Trajan*" and "*e Column. Antonin.*" respectively), where the primary source substantiates the claim that these illustrations are the most authentic depictions of the Roman army. One particular primary citation is especially noteworthy in that it reveals

<sup>34</sup> A tomb discovered in Rome on the Via Flaminia in 1674 was wrongly identified as the tomb of Ovid, and in 1680 Bartoli (Sandby's likely source) published a set of engravings depicting the murals from the tomb; on the tomb and Bartoli's engravings; see Thomas 2003, 1–2.

the acuity and thoughtfulness of the editor. The images in Figure 11 correspond to various passages from *Aeneid* 1, and the second of these pictures (easily passed over due to the unfortunate layout of the plate) depicts Achilles dragging the body of Hector around the walls of Troy.<sup>35</sup> This scene is recalled by Virgil when Aeneas, entering the city of Carthage, reflects upon the frieze on the Temple of Juno:

*Tum vero ingentum gemitum dat pectore ab imo,  
ut spolia, ut currus, utque ipsum corpus amici  
tendentemque manus Priamum conspexit inermis.* (485–487)

Then indeed he lets out an enormous moan from his inmost heart, as he beheld the spoils, the chariot, and the very body of his friend, and Priam, stretching out his feeble hands.

The illustrative artifact is a scene taken from the *Tabula Iliaca Capitolina*, which had been discovered in 1683. It was reproduced in Montfaucon, Sandby's likely source, but the editor shrewdly cites only "*e mensa Iliaca*" (TE XXIII).<sup>36</sup> Like the previous examples, the citation serves to authenticate the accuracy of the illustration—what better source for a scene from the *Iliad*? But in this instance the artifact itself becomes part of the illustration, for Aeneas, recall, is gazing at a frieze that depicts scenes from the Trojan War just like the *Tabula Iliaca*. With this in mind, Sandby's citation authenticates not just the image but the experience of viewing the image: we too, like or even as Aeneas, gaze upon a frieze depicting this painful scene.

As in the case of the *testudo* illustration (Fig. 9), this image is not entirely accurate. The mourning Priam in the background is present neither on the *Tabula Iliaca* nor in Montfaucon's facsimile, and it seems clearly to have been added to correspond to the Virgilian scene. Such minor manipulations, if detected, may call into question the validity of Sandby's claim, but the changes are so subtle and so few that they are not likely to be noticed without careful study and were apparently easily rationalized by Sandby. Yet there is one image that as an ancient artifact is blatantly fabricated and so, by the volume's standards, wholly inaccurate. Figure 12 is an illustration from the fifth book of the *Aeneid* that corresponds to the ekphrasis of the abduction of Ganymede embroidered on the cloak given to

<sup>35</sup> Pl. XXIII

<sup>36</sup> In Volume IV (Book 2): *La guerre, les voitures, les grands chemins, les ponts, les aqueducs, la navigation: Les chemins publics, les aqueducs, & la navigation* (297–302).



Figure 11. Plate XXIII. [1] Juno [2] Hector's body dragged around the walls of Troy [3] Venus holding a rudder on the head of Cupid [4] Cupid (*Aeneid* 1). *Publii Virgilii Maronis Bucolica, Georgica, et Aeneis, Illustrata, ornate, et accuratissime impressa*, ed. William Sandby (London, 1750). Private Collection.



Figure 12. Plate XXXII. The Rape of Ganymede (*Aeneid* 5). *Publii Virgilii Maronis Bucolica, Georgica, et Aeneis, Illustrata, ornate, et accuratissime impressa*, ed. William Sandby (London, 1750). Private Collection.

the victorious Cloanthus (5.249–257).<sup>37</sup> At first blush this image, even to an un-discerning eye, lacks authenticity, and the note in the *Tabularum Explicatio* reveals this to be the case. Sandby cites as his source an ancient gem copied from Maffei, but then goes on to explain the image of the dog: “*cane vero addito a Mic. Ang. que canem Tabellae suae induxit ex mente Virg*” (with the dog, in fact, added by Michelangelo, who introduced the dog into his own painting from the mind of Virgil) (TE XXXII). The reference is to a drawing by Michelangelo of the rape of Ganymede, which depicts, as here, the eagle in flight, carrying away the young boy. The story was a popular subject for artists in the Renaissance, but Michelangelo’s unique contribution is to have added the specifically Virgilian image of the young boy’s baying hounds: *longaevi palmas nequiquam ad sidera tendunt / custodes saevitque canum latratus in auras* (the old guards stretch their palms to the stars in vain, and the barking of dogs rages in the air) (256–257). The engraving in Sandby’s edition is a copy of an engraving after Michelangelo, but Michelangelo’s subject (the eagle and the boy) has been replaced with the “authentic” image from an ancient gem.<sup>38</sup> While such blatant forgery contradicts Sandby’s illustrative agenda, one may forgive this singular instance for the wonderful illustration it creates—a “most accurate” adornment based on the combined authority of the artifact, Michelangelo, and Virgil.

In his great catalogue of eighteenth century books with engravings (*Guide de l’amateur de livres à gravures du XVIIIe siècle*), Henri Cohen adds his own editorial comment to the entry on Sandby’s volume:

Cet ouvrage, illustré d’une manière fort intéressante, contient malheureusement parmi les médailles des pièces imaginées par le savant antiquaire Goltzius, qui a laissé dans le numismatique une réputation d’auteur aussi dangereux que le marquis de Sade dans la littérature (1912, 596).

Though acknowledging Sandby’s unique illustrative program, Cohen laments his use of a since-disproven source, as many of the coins from the great catalogues of Hubert Goltz (Goltzius) had been proven to be fakes (Bassoli 2001, 16).<sup>39</sup> Yet the

<sup>37</sup> Pl. XXXII.

<sup>38</sup> Sandby provides: “*Ganymedes raptus. Gemma antiq. Maffei,*” TE XXXII) and the image of Ganymede and the Eagle can be found in Maffei’s *Gemma antiche* (Vol. 2, Pl. 28); I have not identified Müller’s specific source for the Michelangelo copy; cf. engravings with bereft hounds after Michelangelo by Marcantonio Raimondi (1465–1534), Philippe Thomassin (c. 1562–1622), and Nicolas Beatrizet (attributed) (c. 1507/15–1573), all of these plates have the caption: *GANIMEDIS IVVENIS TROLIANVS RAPTVS A IOVE*.

<sup>39</sup> On the influence and importance of Goltz (forgeries notwithstanding) see Bassoli 2001, 16–18.

observation that the work of Goltzius was “dangerous” suggests that Cohen did not believe that Sandby knew these artifacts were fraudulent, and this exploration of Sandby’s volume suggests the same: while the editor might indulge in an occasional forgery for the sake of illustration, he would not brook, as shown here, the inclusion of a known fake.

Sandby would produce two additional authentic volumes, a sparsely illustrated Terence (published with the Knaptons the following year) and the satires of Juvenal and Persius with fifteen plates as a solo venture in 1763. He then retired from bookselling and became a banker (Sandby 1892, n. 27).<sup>40</sup> Several illustrated editions of Virgil would attempt to imitate Sandby’s “authentic” production. Just five years later (1755), the English engraver John Pine produced his own volume, choosing a selection of artifacts from Sandby’s volume and a few new ones as well. He placed each scene within an ornately decorated frame, and engraved the appropriate line reference (e.g., v.30) in a banner beneath the image.<sup>41</sup> A century later Archibald Hamilton Bryce, an Irish Classicist, produced a scholarly volume that was “Illustrated with Engravings from the most Authentic Sources,” but the illustrations fall somewhat short by comparison.<sup>42</sup> The images themselves are not well drawn, and more significant is the fact that the artist has removed the verse line numbers from the artifact, such that the plates are much less successful as visual representations of the text. And in neither volume is the descriptive list of illustrations as purposefully composed toward authenticity as is Sandby’s. Detractors notwithstanding, Craig Kallendorf has noted that Sandby’s volume is “one of the great 18<sup>th</sup>-century editions” (210)—an observation we have here seen is quite accurate.

---

<sup>40</sup> The author cited here (William Sandby) was grandnephew of the painters John and Paul Sandby, and he says of the bookseller only that he was “a relation” of the painters, who occasionally published their sketches.

<sup>41</sup> Pine illustrated the *Eclogues* and *Georgics*, intending a complete works but passing away before he was able to complete the entire volume.

<sup>42</sup> Bryce published *The works of Publius Virgilius Maro, from the text of Heyne and Wagner. With English notes, a metrical index, and an epitome of Wagner's Quæstiones Virgilianæ* in 1857, emphasizing on the title page his own scholarly merit as well as the authenticity of the illustrations. A note preceding the title page indicates that Bryce had plans to also produce an illustrated Horace, which came to fruition in 1909.

*Appendix: Sources cited in the Tabularum Explicatio**I. Secondary Sources*

Below is a list of the volumes that are cited in the *Tabularum Explicatio*, with Sandby's typical citation (there is slight variation) noted after each entry in brackets. Unless cited in the essay, speculative sources for Sandby's primary citations are not included below.

- Bartoli, Pietro Santi. (1693), *Admiranda Romanarum Antiquitatum ac Veteris Sculpturae Vestigia*, Rome. [Admiranda]
- (1697), *Gli antichi sepolcri; ovvero, Mausolei romani, et etruschi, trovati in Roma et in altri luoghi celebri...* Rome. [antiq. Sepulch. Bartoli]
- Bartoli, Pietro Santi and Francesco Bartoli. (1706), *Picturae Antiquae Cryptarum Romanarum, et Sepulcri Nasonum* Rome. [picturis. antiq. Bartoli]
- Beger, Lorenz. (1692), *Spicilegium Antiquitatis; sive, Variarum ex Antiquitate Elegantiarum, vel Novis Luminibus Illustratarum, vel Recens Etiam Editarum Fasciculi*. Berlin: typis Ulrici Liebperti. [Beger. Spicel.]
- (1696–1701), *Thesaurus Brandenburgicus Selectus*. Berlin. [Beger. Thesaur.]
- Buonanni, Filippo. (1709), *Musaeum Kircherianum: sive; Musaeum A P. Athanasio Kircherio; in Collegio Romano Societatis Jesu*. Rome. [Kircheri Museo in Collect. S. P. Jes. Romae.]
- Chasse, Michel Ange de la. (1700), *Le gemme antiche figurate di Michel Angelo Causeo de la Chausse...* Rome. [Causaeo]
- Fabretti, R. (1683), *De columna Traiani syntagma*. Rome. [Fabretti]
- Gori, Antonio Francesco. (1731–1742), *Museum Florentinum, Exhibens Insignora Vetustatis Monumeta quae Florentiae Sunt in Thesauro Mediceo*. Florence. [Mus. Flor.]
- Lipsius, Justus. (1598), *De militia Romana libri quinque, commentarius ad Polybium*. Antwerp. [Lipsio]
- Maffei, Paolo Alessandro. (1704), *Raccolta di statue antiche e modern data in luce sotto I gloriosi auspice dell Santita di N.S. Papa Clemente XI*. Illustrated by Domenico de Rossi. Rome: stamperia alla Pace. [Stat. antiq. Rossi.]
- (1707–1709), *Gemma antiche figurate date in luce da Domenico de' Rossi*. 4 vols. Rome. [Maffei Gem.]
- Mazzoleni, Alberto. (1740–1744), *In numismata aerea selectiora maximi moduli e museo Pisano olim Corrario commentarii*. Venice. [mus. Pisan.]
- Montfaucon, Bernard de. (1724), *L'antiquité expliquée et représentée en figures*. 5 vols. (each of 2 parts), Paris, 1719. *Supplément*, 5 vols., Paris.

- Orsini, Fulvio. (1606), *Illustrium Imagines, ex Antiquis Marmoribus, Nomismatibus, et Gemmis Expressae quae Exstant Romae, Major Pars apud Fulvium Ursinum*. Antwerp.
- Oisel, Jaques. (1677), *Thesaurus Selectorum Numismatum Antiquorum*. Amsterdam. [*Oisel. Thes*; *Oiselii Thes.*]
- Patin, Charles. (1663), *Familiae romanae quae reperiuntur in antiquis numismatibus ab urbe condita ad tempora divi Augusti: ex bibliotheca Fulvii Ursini, cum adjunctis Antoni Augustini, episc. Herdensisi*. Paris. [*Familiis Romanis Caroli Patin*]
- Pembroke, Thomas Herbert, Earl of. (1746), *Numismata Antiqua in Tres Partes Divisa*. London: n.p.. [*Dom. Comititis de Pembroke*]
- Stosch, Philipp, Baron von. (1724), *Pierres antiques gravées, sur lesquelles les graveurs ont mis leurs noms...tirée des principaux cabinets de l'Europe*. Amsterdam. [*Stochii Gem*]
- Turnbull, George. (1740), *A Treatise on Ancient Painting, containing Observations on the Rise, Progress, and Decline of That Art amongst the Greeks and Romans...* London. [*pict. antiq. Turnbull*]

## 2. "Primary sources" (implied)

### A) Monuments

- The so-called Tomb of Ovid [*Sepulch. Nason.*]
- Trajan's column [*Colum. Traj.*]
- *Tabulae Iliacae* [*mensa Iliaca*]
- The Column of Marcus Aurelius [*Column. Antonii*]

### B) Coins

Generally coins are cited only by name: *gens*, Emperor, etc. (e.g., *ex parte aversa numismatis Marci Aurelii*). Those named by Sandby are listed below.

- Diocletian
- Trajan
- Marcus Aurelius
- Antoninus Pius
- Faustina
- Balbinus
- Nero
- Tiberius
- Gens Calphurnia
- Gens Marcia
- Gens Lollia



- Gens Accoleia
- Commodus
- Turpilianus
- Hadrian
- Augustus
- Agrippa
- Brutus
- Punic coin [*num. Punic.*]

C) *Manuscripts*

- The *Vatican Vergil* [*Cod. Vat.*]

D) *Private Collections*

- Cardinal Farnese [*Farnes.*]
- Richard Mead [*Ric. Mead, M.D.*]
- The King of France [*Regis Gall.*]\*
- Louis Bourdaloue (?) (1632–1704) [*Dom. De Bourdaloue*]\*
- The Earl of Oxford [*Dom. Com. De Oxford*]
- Charles Frederick [*Carolus Frederick Arm.*]
- Antoine Masson (?) *Dominae Masson*\*<sup>43</sup>

\*all from Chéron, Élisabeth Sophie. *Pierres antiques gravées tirées des principaux cabinets de la France*. Paris: s.n., 1717?.

3. *Speculative sources or influences referenced in this essay*

- Bartoli, Pietro Santi. (1672), *Colymna Antoniniana Marci Avrelii Antonini Avgvsti*. Rome: Bellori.
- (1673) *Colonna Traiana, eretta dal Senato e Popolo Romano all'imperatore Traiano Augusto nel suo foro in Roma*. Rome: De Rossi.
- (1677), *Antiquissimi Virgiliani codicis fragmenta et picturae ex Bibliotheca Vaticana: ad priscas imaginum formas a Petro Sancte Bartholi incisae*, Rome: *ex chalcographia R.C.A., apud Pedem marmoreum*.
- Spence, Joseph. (1747), *Polymetis; or, An Enquiry concerning the Agreement between the Works of the Roman Poets, and the Remains of the Antient Artists...in Ten Books*. London: R. Dodsley.

---

<sup>43</sup> I believe the feminine “*Dominae*” is a mistranslation of the French plural abbreviation for *monsieur*—*Mrs.*, used by Montfaucon (i.e., (“*Cornaline du Cabinet de Mrs. Masson*”)); Mariette references these same engravings as “*Cabinet de Messieurs Masson*” (1750, 456).

### References

- Bassoli, Ferdinando. (2001), *Antiquarian Books on Coins and Medals from the Fifteenth to the Nineteenth Century*. Trans. Elisabeth Saville. London: Spink/Kolbe.
- Cohen, Henri and Seymour de Ricci. (1912), *Guide de l'amateur de livres à gravures du XVIIIe siècle*. Paris: P. Rouquette.
- Cust, Lionel and Sidney Colvin. (1898), *History of the Society of the Dilettanti*. London: Mac-Millan.
- Kallendorf, Craig. (2009), *A Catalogue of the Junius Spencer Morgan Collection of Virgil in the Princeton University Library*. New Castle: Oak Knoll Press.
- Mariette, Pierre-Jean. (1750), *Traité des pierres gravées*. Paris, for the author.
- Redford, B. (2008), *Dilettanti: The Antic and the Antique in Eighteenth-Century England*. Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum.
- Sandby, William. (1892), *Thomas and Paul Sandby: Royal Academicians; Some Account of Their Lives and Works*. London, Seeley and co.
- Suerbaum, Werner. (2008), *Handbuch Der Illustrierten Vergil-Ausgaben 1502–1840: Geschichte, Typologie, Zyklen Und Kommentierter Katalog Der Holzschnitte Und Kupferstiche Zur Aeneis in Alten Drucken: Mit Besonderer Berücksichtigung Der Bestände Der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek München Und Ihrer Digitalisate Von Bildern Zu Werken Des P. Vergilius Maro*. New York: Georg Olms Verlag.
- Thomas, Ben. (2003), "Finding Ovid through Raphael in the Schools of the Tombs," *Art on the Line*, 1.2: 1–11.
- Wright, David H., (1993), *The Vatican Vergil, a Masterpiece of Late Antique Art*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- *Vergilius Vaticanus: vollständige Faksimile-Ausgabe im Original-format des Codex Vaticanus Latinus 3225 der Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana*. Austria: Akademische Druck-u. Verlagsanstalt, 1984.

### Editions of Virgil

- Brant, Sebastian, ed. *Publii Virgilii Maronis Opera cum quinque vulgatis commentariis expolitissimisque figuris atque imaginibus nuper per Sebastianum Brant superadditis...* Strasbourg: Grieninger, 1502.
- Ogilby, John, ed. *The Works of Publius Virgilius Maro*. London: 1654.
- Sandby, Joseph, ed. *Publii Virgilii Maronis Bucolica, Georgica et Aeneis, Illustrata, ornata, et accuratissime impressa*. London: Knapton & Knapton, 1750.
- Pine, Johannes, ed. *Publii Virgilii Maronis Opera*. London: 1755.
- Bryce, Archibald Hamilton, ed. *The works of Publius Virgilius Maro, from the text of Heyne and Wagner*. London: Richard Griffin, 1857.

### Sandby's Volumes

- Horace. (1749), *Quinti Horatii Flacci opera*. London: G. Sandby.
- Juvenal and Persius. (1763), *D. Junii Juvenalis et Auli Persii Flacci Satyrae. Tabulis Aeneis Illustravit, et Notas Variorum Selectas, Suasque Addidit G.S.* London: G. Sandby.

- Terence. (1751), *Publii Terentii Afri Comoediae : ad optimorum exemplarium fidem recensitae. Accesserunt variae lectiones, quae in libris MSS. & eruditorum commentariis notatu digniores occurrunt.* London: J. and P. Knapton and G. Sandby.
- Virgil. (1750), *Publii Virgilii Maronis Bucolica, Georgica, et Aeneis, Illustrata, ornatè, et accuratissime impressa.* London: J. and P. Knapton and G. Sandby.



# The Salii at the *Nonae* of October: Reading Lyd. *Mens.* 4.138 W\*

LUIGI PEDRONI

Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences – Vilnius

The *liber de mensibus* was written by John Lydus in the sixth century AD on the subject of the festivals of the Roman calendar. Although it retains its character of Byzantine compilation, it reveals, after careful reading, many interesting extracts drawn from the works of other writers and antiquarians that are now lost.<sup>1</sup> Reading Lydus' writings, however, reveals a number of interesting passages which remain ambiguous, either because of their erudite nature, or because of possible misunderstandings due to Lydus' imperfect knowledge of Latin,<sup>2</sup> or else simply because of the vicissitudes of the manuscript tradition.<sup>3</sup> The following passage<sup>4</sup> that refers to October 5<sup>th</sup> is a good example of the issues that can arise in a reading of *de mensibus*:

Τῇ πέμπτῃ τοῦ Ὀκτωβρίου μηνὸς οἱ ῥεγεωνάρχαι καὶ σεβαστοφόροι ἐχόρευον ἐν τῷ Γουστείῳ, οἷον ἐν τῷ ὀψοπωλείῳ, εἰς τιμὴν Τιβερίου· τὸν δὲ τοιοῦτον τόπον νῦν οἱ ἰδιῶται Αὐγουστεῖον καλοῦσιν. εἰς τὸ ἄσκεπον τῆς Δάφνης εἰς τὴν μικρὰν αὐλὴν Κωνσταντῖνος ὁ Μέγας ἔστησε στήλην τῆς ἑαυτοῦ μητρὸς, ἐξ ἧς ὠνόμασε τὸν τόπον Αὐγουστεῖον.

At the nones of October, Lydus recalls the occurrence of a particular ritual in a place called Γουστείως, namely the market, where ῥεγεωνάρχαι and σεβαστοφόροι danced in honor of Tiberius. The text continues with a topographic description in which it is specified that the place was called Αὐγουστεῖον by the common people, and was located near the site where Constantine erected a

---

<sup>1</sup> Bandy 1983, xxix; Maas 1992, 62–63; Dubuisson and Schamp 2006, CIII–CX. On the *De ostensis*, see Domenici 2007, 14.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Bandy 1983, xxxiii.

<sup>3</sup> In general: Bandy 1983, xxxix ff.; in particular: Wuensch 1967<sup>2</sup>, VI ff.

<sup>4</sup> Lyd. *Mens* 4.138 W.

statue to his mother. Read in this way, the passage is certainly difficult to understand; the few modern attempts there have been to amend names or lexical and topographic ambiguities have not produced satisfactory results.

First of all, the word designating the locations where the ritual took place is not clear: in the site called Γουστειῶς, i.e. Αὐγουστεῖον, the temple of Augustus, or in the Βουστίῳς—as one scholar has supposed<sup>5</sup>—which should be an area with commercial ties, like the *macellum* or *forum boarium*. But Lydus combines these antiquarian details with a few words of comment that do not seem to add any real clarification. The very fact that he feels the need to give long topographical explanations indicates that he also encountered great difficulty in understanding the original information. He, or rather his source, specifies that the Γουστειῶς is actually the fish market (οἶον ἐν τῷ ὀψοπωλείῳ). In addition, Lydus—and this time it seems certain the attribution of this note belongs to him—says that this place is called Αὐγουστεῖον and would be at the small hall. The latter remark topographically refers to Constantinople, but we cannot even be sure whether the Byzantine writer had rightly understood his original source and the entire passage refers to that city.

How to interpret, then, the mention of ῥεγεωνάρχαι and σεβαστοφόροι? In fact, the two terms that define the protagonists of the celebration are not immediately intelligible. The former seems to refer to a magistrate of the *regiones*, but it was not used by any other ancient writer. The latter does not seem particularly relevant. It was translated as *Flamines Augustales* by the first Lydus editors,<sup>6</sup> literally meaning “(image) bearers of the emperor.”<sup>7</sup> By identifying ῥεγεωνάρχαι and σεβαστοφόροι respectively with *curatores* of *regiones* and imperial *imaginiferes*, not only is it unclear why they should dance during the ceremony, but it is also mysterious that only these two groups should take part. On the other hand, Lydus shows elsewhere<sup>8</sup> the correct understanding of *imaginiferes* and *curatores* and so this would be a strange confusion, although not impossible in view of his work methodology.

Another of the many problematic issues within the passage concerns the verb χορεύω (to dance), which is used to describe the celebration officiated by ῥεγεωνάρχαι and σεβαστοφόροι. Roth has recently<sup>9</sup> attempted to overcome the difficulties with this verb (present also in the synoptic passage of Suda) by translating it with the English idiom “to use to go.” However, even this interpretation

<sup>5</sup> Actually, in some manuscripts the place is called Βουστίῳς. Cf. Wuensch 1967<sup>2</sup>, 163.

<sup>6</sup> Roether 1827, 287; Bekker 1837, 107.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Mason 1974, 84.

<sup>8</sup> *Lyd. Mag.* 1.34 e 1.46 W.

<sup>9</sup> C. Roth, translation of Suda, Alpha 4413 Adler, “Αὐγουστος,” in Suda On Line (SOL).

leaves it ambiguous as to which ceremony they used to go every year to the market, or to the Αὐγουστειῶν. The presence of the verb χορεύω in the Suda confirms its use by Lydus. The ambiguity, however, leaves us pondering two strange alternatives: if we cannot imagine the σεβαστοφόροι taking a few dance steps during a religious ceremony, it is unlikely to seem any more comprehensible that the city magistrates should have done so. The fact that late Byzantine sources remember the use of celebratory dances at court does not add any decisive element because they do not refer to the sixth century A.D.

The dance immediately calls to mind the typical activities of a well-known Roman college of priests, the Salii. According to ancient etymologies, the Salii derived their name from a ritual dance<sup>10</sup> that they performed in honor of the god Mars, to whose cult they were intimately linked. It is interesting to note, furthermore, that we do not know of any other Roman priests whose recorded ceremonial duties included a ritual dance. It is also worth mentioning that the Salii danced on October 19<sup>th</sup> during the celebration of the *Armilustrum*.<sup>11</sup>

Finally, the name of the beneficiary of the ritual, Tiberius, causes a great deal of perplexity. The text of the *de mensibus* was drafted by Lydus in the first half of the sixth century—predating his *de magistratibus* (written around AD 554) and shortly before his other work, *de ostensis*, which is placed after the year 540.<sup>12</sup> In particular, the failure to mention the construction of the church of S. Sophia in Constantinople (532)<sup>13</sup> in the passage where he speaks of the Αὐγουστειῶν (which was later the site of the Basilica of Justinian) could suggest a *terminus post quem* of c. 525–530. Thus, the possibility that the Tiberius in question was Tiberius II, successor of Justin II, seems implausible. According to the common opinion, Tiberius II was born around this time. He was appointed Caesar in 574, was raised to the rank of Augustus only in 578, and died four years later. Lydus, on the other hand, was born in 490<sup>14</sup> and seems to have died well before Tiberius II's ascension to the throne, which took place somewhere between 565 and 570.<sup>15</sup> Even if we concede that in extreme old age he may have attended the investiture ceremony of Tiberius II in 578, how can we explain the

<sup>10</sup> Varro *LL* 5.85; Fest. 438.27; Serv. *Aen.* 8.285 e 663; Torelli 1990; Mora 1995, 238ff.; ThesCRA II, 2004, Salii 33–339, with more sources and bibliography.

<sup>11</sup> Lydus recalls the *Armilustrum* in March: Lyd. *Mens.* 4.34 W.; Coarelli 1988, 433–434; Rüpké 1995, 218–219 and 264–265; Fowler 2004, 250–251.

<sup>12</sup> Lyd. *Mag.* 1.8; 1.9; 2.4; 2.12 W. Cf. Bandy 1983, xxvii; Dubuisson and Schamp 2006, LXXIX–LXXXIV. On the chronology of the *de ostensis*, see Dominici 2007, 11.

<sup>13</sup> Lethaby and Swainson 2004, 21 ff.

<sup>14</sup> Bandy 1983, x. Lydus (*Mag.* 3.26) relates that he arrived at Constantinople when he was 21, under the consulship of Secodianus in 511.

<sup>15</sup> Bandy 1983, xxiv–xxv.

inclusion of this information in the *de mensibus* written 40 years before? Therefore, we cannot understand why Lydus should have given such prominence to that event while leaving unmentioned any other celebrations that he may have witnessed directly or indirectly. The presence of references to contemporary events in the *de mensibus* should be considered incidental due to its status as an antiquarian compilation; moreover, the use of the verb in the imperfect tense (ἔχόμενον) bolsters the suggestion that the event had been held in the remote past. On the other hand, the assumption that in late Roman or Byzantine Constantinople (or even in Rome) magistrates and priests danced in honor of Tiberius, the successor of Augustus, appears equally dubious. Finally, the hypothesis that in the celebration of October 5<sup>th</sup> the main officiating priests were the Salii, is worthy of serious consideration, considering the peculiar form of celebration, but requires proof.

In keeping with the long series of doubts reported so far, we must sadly conclude that the information gathered by Lydus presents insurmountable exegetical difficulties. Interpretation of any of these elements examined can never remain uncontroversial. In particular, when eliminating the possibility that the celebration was performed in honor of Tiberius II, the reasonable suspicion that the ceremony originally did not take place in Constantinople but in Rome becomes even stronger. Therefore, it seems appropriate to try to extrapolate from the passage the portion that might have derived most directly from the original source, eliminating the Byzantine addition relative to Constantinople.

Thus, the starting point for a commentary on the passage of the *de mensibus* must reside with the sense of the word Γουστειῶς and its historical-topographical connotations: otherwise, it is difficult to explain why at the beginning of the text Lydus uses that term and not the more readily-understood Ἀγουστειῶν. As an attempt to offer topographical information, the choice of word is entirely explicable. We can infer that Γουστειῶς must have occurred in Lydus' source in a form that was not Ἀγουστειῶν. Γουστειῶς is not a Greek word and could in no case give rise to such specification: οἶον ἐν τῷ ὀψοπωλείῳ. Therefore those words must be attributed to the Latin-language source of Lydus and could conceivably offer some key to reconstructing the meaning of the original. The *glossa* in the Suda derived from Lydus does not provide further clarity, though; its text is precisely comparable to that of the Lydus passage except for a few minor details, which may or may not derive from the original. The main difference is the name of the place of the ceremony, which in the Suda is always in the form Ἀγουστειῶν.<sup>16</sup> However, for this reason, it sounds even less comprehensible than Lydus' text: "Ἀγουστειῶν would

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Suda, Iota 446 Adler.



have been so named because the ῥεγεωνάρχαι and σεβαστοφόροι (...) danced into Αὐγουστεῖον in honor of Tiberius, the place was then named with the name of Augustus.”<sup>17</sup> Evidently, the editor of the Suda failed in his attempt to interpret the passage of Lydus. In particular, the adverb νῦν—significantly used by Lydus and eliminated in the Suda—might support the idea of a diachronic reading of the two place names, thus confirming that the term Βουστήως / Γουστείως was antecedent to Αὐγουστεῖον, and in this case referred somehow to a distinct site.

As the topographic digression refers to the city of Constantinople, it can be attributed to Lydus, but it cannot be used to suggest that the original place of the ceremony was in Constantinople. Moreover, it is worth noting that the Constantinopolitan Αὐγουστεῖον, located in the palace complex,<sup>18</sup> was not situated near the market or the fish market.<sup>19</sup> So, unless we assume that it was constructed on a previous building of commercial origin, we would better suppose that the ritual took place in Rome at the *macellum* and the topographical relation to the fish market is more obviously relevant. Ὅψον, although used to indicate food or cooked food, commonly meant fish and therefore the most plausible translation of ἐν τῷ ὀψοπωλείῳ is “in the fish market”: the idiomatic Latin equivalent would be *forum piscarium* (or *piscatorium*).

It is believed that Rome’s oldest *macellum*, built plausibly between the first and second Punic Wars, was located to the north and east of the Roman Forum. The complex would have been partly replaced by other more specialized buildings, such as the *forum cuppedinis* and the *forum piscatorium*.<sup>20</sup> So, the sense that in Lydus’ passage the term Βουστήως / Γουστείως refers to the *macellum* near the *forum* seems warranted. However, even admitting the possibility that Lydus’ source made reference to that place in Rome, there is little reason to locate any activities of the Salii there. In fact, the nearest place to the *macellum* where they were performing their ritual dance in Lydus would have been the *comitium*, where sources tell us the Salii jumped or danced in the presence of *Pontifices* and *Tribuni Celerum*.<sup>21</sup>

It seems appropriate, however, to consider a passage from Varro that sheds further light on the location of the Roman *macellum*.<sup>22</sup> Varro writes:

<sup>17</sup> Suda, Alpha 4413 Adler.

<sup>18</sup> Janin 1964, 59; Berger 1997, 361–362.

<sup>19</sup> The *Forum Bovis* and the *Forum Tauri* of Constantinople were far from S. Sophia: Janin 1964, 64–70; Berger 1997, 367.

<sup>20</sup> Liv. 26.27.2; LTUR III 1996, 201f. (G. Pisani Sartorio); Ferrary 2001

<sup>21</sup> Varro *LL* 5.85. Fowler 58–59.

<sup>22</sup> Varro *LL* 5.32.

*Ubi quid generatim, additum ab eo cognomen, ut Bovarium Forum, Forum Holitorium: hoc erat antiquum macellum, ubi holerum copia, (...) Secundum Tiberim to <Por> tunium Forum Piscarium vocant: ideo ait Plautus: Apud Forum Piscarium.*

The crucial element of this passage is the term “*iunium*,” which scholars have interpreted in a variety of ways. Some have preferred to integrate the word “<Por> *tunium*,” seeing this as an uncommon form that indicates the temple of Portunus; the temple was located near the Tiber in the *forum boarium*,<sup>23</sup> a location that fits reasonably well with the phrase “*Secundum Tiberim*.” Others have proposed reading “*adiunctum*,” while De Ruyt recently returned to the original version “*iunium*,” positing that it is an indicator for time, and merely specifies the month of June.<sup>24</sup> In such a reading, Varro might have been alluding to a temporary market set up in June along the river on the occasion of festivals or rituals perhaps in honor of the river. Apart from the *tiberinalia*, celebrated in honor of Tiberinus, marking the anniversary of the founding of the temple of the god on the Tiber Island,<sup>25</sup> Festus<sup>26</sup> also recalls the celebration of the *ludi piscatorii* in June, involving the dedication of *pisciculi* to Vulcan. According to Festus, it was carried out in Trastevere, while Ovid<sup>27</sup> recalls conducting a festival in honor of the Tiber at the Campus Martius on June 8<sup>th</sup>.

There is another apparent issue with the Varronian passage, though; when Varro refers to a fish market along the Tiber and cites as an example a fragment of Plautus, he presents the *forum piscarium* as a market near the Forum. But in reality we do not need to see a topographical meaning in Plautus’ fragment. When the antiquarian says that someone called the fish market *forum piscarium*—presumably in contrast to *piscatorium*, also attested—and cites Plautus, it is almost certainly a linguistic rather than a topographic point that is intended.

However, the main interest here is that Varro describes with so much emphasis a temporary market, defining it as *forum piscarium* and situating it along the Tiber. Also, in the text of the antiquarian from Reate, the binomial *forum boarium* - *forum holitorium* seems to find precise correspondence in the dual explanation “*hoc erat antiquum macellum, ubi holerum copia*.” Therefore, if the *forum* was *holitorium* (“*holerum copia*”), the *macellum* represented the ancient *forum boarium*. It seems natural to suppose that before the third century BC—

<sup>23</sup> LTUR IV 1999, 153–154 (C. Buzzetti).

<sup>24</sup> De Ruyt 1983. 240 ff. with bibliography.

<sup>25</sup> Fowler 2004, 203.

<sup>26</sup> Fest. 274.35–37 / 276.1–3 L. Peruzzi 1970, 127. Coarelli 1983, 178.

<sup>27</sup> Ov. *Fast.* 6.235.

the period in which it is posited that the *macellum* was built near the Forum—the activities like butchery and the sale of meat and fish were organized along the Tiber at the *forum boarium*, since it represented an obvious crossroads of traffic and commerce.<sup>28</sup>

An element for supporting this hypothesis can be seen in the traditional Plutarchean discussion of the *macellum*. Plutarch<sup>29</sup> suggests that a thief whose name was *macellum* once lived in Rome where, after accumulating wealth from his crimes, he was eventually captured and punished. The meat market was built with the fortune that he had accumulated. This is quite clearly a version of the story of Hercules and Cacus the cattle thief, a tale which itself was attached to the *forum boarium*.<sup>30</sup> These suggestive parallel mythologies add to the sense that *macellum* and *forum boarium* in some ways are overlapping terms. One might assume that such duplication occurred when the activity of selling meat was transferred from the banks of the Tiber to the new site near the *forum*.

Therefore, it is worth repeating that there seems to be insufficient evidence to connect directly the activities of the Salii at the *macellum* of the *forum* or the *forum piscatorium* through the words of the literary sources. Instead, by other evidence, it is not difficult to connect the Salii to the *forum boarium*. First, it is appropriate to recall the tradition recalled by Servius, the commentator of Virgil, which stated that they also performed some rituals at the Sublician bridge,<sup>31</sup> which served the *forum boarium*. In addition, the verses of Virgil commented on by Servius and the testimony of Macrobius, who recalled the words of other authors,<sup>32</sup> are crucial. They agree that the Salii were originally connected to the cult of Hercules at the Ara Maxima, the main deity worshipped at the *forum boarium*.

Following the example of Hercules,<sup>33</sup> the Salii used to wear crowns of poplar, later replaced with crowns made of the laurel from the *lauretum maius* on the Aventine.<sup>34</sup> Hercules was said to have crowned himself with poplar from the Aventine after his defeat of Cacus near the hill. The same feature was found on the Hercules Victor at Tibur, with whose cult the Salii were additionally affiliated. This is another connection between the Salii of Rome and the *forum boarium*. In fact, according to a story told by Macrobius, expertly re-evaluated by

<sup>28</sup> Coarelli 1988b.

<sup>29</sup> Plut. QR 54. Cf. Fest. Paul. 112.14 L.

<sup>30</sup> Coarelli 1988, 130–138.

<sup>31</sup> Serv. Aen. 2.166. Cf. Catull. 17.5.

<sup>32</sup> Serv. Aen. 8.275 and 288.

<sup>33</sup> Serv. Aen. 8.276.

<sup>34</sup> On the Aventine the Salii celebrated the *Armilustrum* on October 19<sup>th</sup>, see Varro LL 5.153.

Coarelli,<sup>35</sup> Octavius Hersennius wrote a work titled *De sacris saliaribus Tiburtium* in which the Salii of Tibur were represented as priests of Hercules. It must be supposed that Octavius was well versed in religious affairs of Tibur if, as Masurius Sabinus writes, he was as a young man one of the *tibicines* of that city, who then accumulated a considerable fortune and dedicated a tenth of that fortune to the temple of Hercules Victor at the *forum boarium* in Rome.

The relationship between the Salii and the Sabines, and in particular with the city of Tibur, is also emphasized in a passage of Plutarch in which the name of the Etruscan king Ἄννιος—ancestor of Σάλιος eponymous of the Salii—is amended to Ἀννίωv, denoting instead the Annio river, which flowed not far from Tibur.<sup>36</sup>

Admitting on the basis of this evidence a possible connection between the Salii and Hercules of the *forum boarium*, it would be appropriate to try to understand the role that they could play in this area and explain their possible connection with the cult of Hercules at the Ara Maxima, where Hercules was both a deity for warriors as well as a protector of shepherds and merchants.

According to an old tradition, Morrius, king of Veii, established the *carmen saliare* in honor of Halesus, the son of Neptune.<sup>37</sup> This name might recall Mamurius Veturius, the legendary craftsman who made copies of the *ancile*, the shield which miraculously fell from the sky and was then preserved by the Salii;<sup>38</sup> on the other hand the name could be linked to μωρός, a Greek word which means “tasteless” (and consequently “silly”), and *muria*, a Roman mixture of salt and water. The Servian account of the legendary story of the birth of the Salii not only seems to preserve the memory of an Etruscan version of the event too, but also supports the mythical relationship between the Salii and Halesus. The latter was thought to be the son of Neptune<sup>39</sup> and, according to a legend, was the eponymous hero of the ethnos of the Faliscans.<sup>40</sup> Clearly, his name is afterwards linked with that of the Faliscans as a mythical projection. However, Halesus is also remembered as the founder of the city of Alsium.<sup>41</sup> This not only establishes the Etruscan context as Alsium, the Roman port city of Caere, it also apparently confirms a pseudo-etymological relationship with Halesus and Faliscans. At the root of this link, however, is undoubtedly the word ἄλς, which indi-

<sup>35</sup> Macrobi. *Sat.* 3.12.7; Coarelli 1988, 182ff.

<sup>36</sup> Ps. Plut. *Parall.* 40. Cf. Dion. Hal. 1.52.

<sup>37</sup> Serv. *Aen.* 8.285.

<sup>38</sup> Dion Hal. 2.71.2; Liv. 1.20.4; Ov. *Fast.* 3.259–260. Cf. Plut. *Numa* 13; Fest. Paul. 117. 17–19 L.; Lact. *Inst.* 1.21.45; Serv. *Aen.* 8.664. Peruzzi 1998, 78–79.

<sup>39</sup> Serv. *Aen.* 8.285.

<sup>40</sup> Ov. *Am.* 3.13.31 ff.; *Fast.* 4.73f.; Plin. *NH* 3.51 (Cato); Solin. 2.7; Serv. *Aen.* 7.695.

<sup>41</sup> Sil. Ital. 8.476.

cates salt: thus, reports that Halesus would have been the son of Neptune become understandable. Finally, the pseudo-etymological connection “*salii*–salt” would easily allow us to explain the reason for the connection with the legend of their creation by the Etruscan king Morrius. In fact, these connections seem to imply the presence of salt among the other commodities at the *forum boarium*: not only would salt have a connection to the handling of meat and fish, but it would have additional meaning in signifying the wealth at stake in the long conflict between the Veientes and the Romans for possession of the *campus salinarum* and the harbor of Ostia. Not surprisingly, the settlement of the colony at Ostia was attributed, according to tradition, to the king Ancus Marcius, who would have created the *salinae* on this spot.<sup>42</sup>

Therefore, alongside a tradition that tried to explain the meaning of the name of those priests by connecting it to the particular type of ritual performance (*salio* = jump / dance), it seems possible to identify another version that connected their name to salt. As the first would seem devoid of any particular characterization, the other one seems nearest to Etruscan cultural and political context. It is difficult to determine, however, whether they were totally independent.

Finally there is the connection of the name of the *Salii* with salt. On the subject of salt in ancient times, it is enough to mention that at least from Homeric times<sup>43</sup> it was a synonym for culture. Considered (wrongly) indispensable for living beings,<sup>44</sup> salt was extremely useful for storing food (particularly cheese and meat), for breeding,<sup>45</sup> and for the working of leather. It was used for medicinal,<sup>46</sup> ritual, and apotropaic purposes. As has been highlighted,<sup>47</sup> Hercules of the *forum boarium* would have been also a kind of Hercules Salaris just like that attested at Alba Fucens, acting as a divine force that kept flies away from the Ara Maxima, as they were a symbolic representation of the decay of the flesh.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Liv. 1.33: *Silua Maesia Veientibus adempta usque ad mare imperium prolatum et in ore Tiberis Ostia urbs condita, salinae circa factae*. Cf. Euseb. *Chron.* 97a Helm; Recently, Camous 2004.

<sup>43</sup> Hom *Od.* 11.122–123; Sall. *Iug.* 80.7. In general, Traina 1992; Murolo 1995.

<sup>44</sup> Plin. *NH* 31.88.

<sup>45</sup> Cheese: Colum 12.13.2; Plin. *NH* 11.97 and 28.34; flesh: Strab. 4.3.2; leather: Cato 135.3; in veterinary: Plin. *NH* 31.86 e 105; production of milk: Arist. *HAnim* 8.10; Verg. *Georg.* 3.394–397; Colum. 6.4; Plin. *NH* 31.87–88.

<sup>46</sup> Plin. *NH* 31.86; Diosc. 5. 125

<sup>47</sup> Chioffi 1999, 126; Coarelli 1988b, 133–134; Torelli 1993.

<sup>48</sup> Varro *ap.* Plut. *QR* 90; cf. Plin. *NH* 10.77; Solin. 1.10.

At this point, it is possible to suggest that prior to their establishment (traditionally attributed to Numa or Tullius Hostilius) as “children of the *Rex*”<sup>49</sup> and priests of Mars, the *Salii* performed their warrior activities in close relation with salt. Considering the intrinsic warrior characteristics of that priesthood, it would not seem implausible to imagine that originally they were entrusted with the defense of the precious salt of the *forum boarium*, perhaps under the auspices of Hercules. This interpretive model is attested in Crete in imperial times where the guardians of the salt deposit were called ἄλοποι.<sup>50</sup> The presence of *Custodes Herculi Saliari* at Alba Fucens,<sup>51</sup> although interesting, unfortunately does not provide a direct comparison, since it is not possible to establish the activities and responsibilities of those particular priests. In fact, they may have been not very different from the *Pinari* and *Potiti* who were traditionally entrusted with the custody of the *Ara Maxima* in Rome before Appius Claudius’ *publicatio*.

Salt could also play a key role in the processing and cleaning of metal objects, whose power was known to be increased by the slightly corrosive grit. Its preservative power could be used not only to prolong the availability of food, but also to avoid the oxidation of metals and their corruption. Not surprisingly, the *Salii* had a leading role in the *feriae* of *Armilustria* and *Tubilustria* where bronze objects were cleaned. It is perhaps worth mentioning that in the sanctuary of *Fors Fortuna* along the Tiber near the *campus salinarum*, a temple attributed by one ancient source to *Ancus Marcius*,<sup>52</sup> dedications have been found made by the *conlegium aerariorum*.<sup>53</sup> Finally, in March, the month dedicated to craftsmen and in particular to the legendary *Mamurius Veturius*, who created the bronze copies of the *ancilia*, the *Salii* were again involved in certain rituals.

It seems possible to conclude, finally, that an ancient tradition remembered some connection of the *Salii* to the *forum boarium*, in which the Lydian topographic terms Βουστήϊος (Γουστειῖος) / *forum piscatorium* can be understood as referring to the *forum boarium*. In light of this interpretation it is possible to clarify another point of uncertainty within the passage of Lydus: the beneficiary of the ritual. In fact, one could wonder if the beneficiary were the Tiber and not *Tiberius*. If the ritual took place along the river at the *forum boarium* / *forum piscatorium* it is possible to imagine a ceremony in honor of the river god. In addition, in the ancient sources a celebration of fishermen that was held at the Tiber banks is mentioned and Ovid recalls a specific event in honor of the river

<sup>49</sup> Torelli 1990, 98.

<sup>50</sup> Sonnabend 1999, 432.

<sup>51</sup> CIL IX, 3961. Torelli 1993.

<sup>52</sup> Coarelli 1988, 257; Coarelli 1988b, 136–137; Zevi 1996, 82–87.

<sup>53</sup> ILLRP 96–99. Champeaux 1982, 236.

god. Finally, it is not impossible that a Byzantine writer could confuse the names Tiberis and Tiberius: the geographer Ptolemy<sup>54</sup> called the Tiber Τιβέριος instead of Τίβερις. The mention of the Tiber in the context of the Lydian passage would not surprise at all, and would better explain the purpose of the ceremony.

However, a passage of Servius,<sup>55</sup> possibly derived from Varro, offers a point of great importance for the identification of the beneficiary of the ritual, and may even be decisive in deciphering the whole Lydian passage. The Virgilian commentator writes about the Salii: “*saltabant autem ritu veteri armati post victoriam Tiburtinorum de Volscis. Sunt autem salii Martis et Herculis, quoniam Chaldaei stellam Martis Herculeam dicunt: quos Varro sequitur. et Tiburtes salios etiam dicaverant.*” Thus, the Salii (of Tibur?) celebrated with a dance the victory of the Tiburtines against the Volscians.<sup>56</sup> In a passage already cited, Macrobius points out that in a book of Octavius Hersennius dedicated solely to the rites of the Salii of Tibur, it is revealed that they sacrificed to Hercules on certain days.<sup>57</sup> Might one of these days have been October 5<sup>th</sup>, the anniversary of victory over the Volscians? In addition, it is conceivable that there was some confusion between Τιβέριος and Τίβερις, as well as a misunderstanding *lectio facilior* between Τιβέριος and Τιβούρ / Τίβουρα / Τίβουρις.<sup>58</sup> Thanks to the joint presence in the passage of Servius of three elements (the Salii, the dance and celebration of Tibur), the suspicion arises that behind the Lydian text there is probably the same passage of Varro. The Salii, therefore, commemorated not the Tiber or Tiberius, but the victory against the enemies of Tibur. This basic information was then misinterpreted by Lydus.

The other problem is the meaning of ῥεγεωνάρχαι, who would have danced with σεβαστοφόροι, information that is missing in the corresponding references in Servius. First, it should be emphasized that the Greek word ῥεγεωνάρχαι is found only in this passage of Lydus. It is not possible to determine who they were or which magistrates the Byzantine antiquarian meant by that term. A possible solution is to recognize in ῥεγεωνάρχαι the successors of the *praefectus urbi* created in the regal period,<sup>59</sup> whose duties were then divided. In the late imperial age, the *curatores urbi* dealt with the administration of urban areas. The hypothesis that higher authorities could attend a peculiar rite officiated by the Salii would seem to be supported by the testimony on the Praenestine calendar, which states that on March 19<sup>th</sup> in the *comitium* the Salii danced in the presence

<sup>54</sup> Ptol. 3.1.5.

<sup>55</sup> Serv. Aen. 8.285.

<sup>56</sup> According to Giuliani (1970, 15 note 4) they were Aequi.

<sup>57</sup> Macrobi. *Sat.* 3.12.7.

<sup>58</sup> Respectively: Ptol. 3.1.54; Strab. 5.238; Steph. Byz. s.v. Cf. Giuliani 1970, 7.

<sup>59</sup> Liv. 1.59.12; Dion.Hal. 2.12.1; Tac. *Ann.* 6.11.

of the *Tribuni Celerum*.<sup>60</sup> Nevertheless, we must admit that the ῥεγεωνάρχαι did not take part in the dance of Salii, but they were mere spectators of the rite. In addition, it should be noted that Lydus knows the *Praefecti*, who are mentioned by him several times, and, therefore, the idea that ῥεγεωνάρχαι can be identified precisely in the *Tribuni Celerum* cannot be ruled out a priori. Unfortunately, however, we do not have much information on those magistrates. They were created by Romulus, were chosen in the *curiae*, and represented the bodyguard of the king.<sup>61</sup> It is also possible that Lydus' source reported something about persons related to the royal entourage participating in, or, rather, attending the ritual, and the Byzantine writer interpreted them as ῥεγεωνάρχαι.

The σεβαστοφόροι should, then, be understood not as the bearers of the image of the emperor, but as the bearers of sacred objects that could be identified with the Salii. Of course, this proposal is based only on the verb used by the Byzantine antiquarian to describe the type of celebration. What then might have led Lydus to define the Salii (priests that he seems to know well elsewhere<sup>62</sup>) as σεβαστοφόροι is not easy even to guess. Perhaps the writer has used an ancient source (perhaps in Latin imperfectly understood) in which Salii were generically referred to as those who danced while bringing sacred objects, a definition which fits with the known details about the Salii in their capacity as guardians of the *ancilia*, the shields that they carried in the sacred procession during special celebrations.<sup>63</sup>

In conclusion, the intrinsic complexities and ambiguities in the reading of this passage of John Lydus make it possible to understand only in very broad terms its reliability and the implications of its original historical, topographical, and religious source material. It seems probable that Lydus has mixed at least two original sources: one about the commemoration by the Salii (of Tibur?) of the Tiburtines' victory over the Volscians, and the other about the dance of the Roman Salii in the presence of the city magistrates at the *forum boarium*. He then placed the ritual at the *nonae* of October. If the information about the Salii seems to derive perhaps directly from Varro, we should note that other details, in particular the calendar arrangement of the celebration, are not found in Servius. However, rather than representing an original insertion by Lydus, it could be a part of the original Varronian note, recalled secondhand by Lydus. In other words, some feeble trace of a celebration of the Salii on October 5<sup>th</sup> reported by

<sup>60</sup> Fowler 2004, 58–59.

<sup>61</sup> On the *Celeres*: Fest 55; Plin. *NH* 33.35; Dion.Hal. 2.13.64; Serv. *Aen.* 11.603; Liv. 1.15.7; Zonar. 8.3.4; Plut. *Rom.* 26; Numa 7.

<sup>62</sup> Lyd. *Mens.* 4.2 and 55 W.

<sup>63</sup> Mora 1995, 238 ff. with sources and bibliography.



Varro may have been preserved—probably more completely than by Servius—thanks to the confused and awkward text of a Byzantine writer.

### References

- Bandy, A. (1983), *On powers, or, The Magistracies of the Roman state*. Introduction, critical text, translation, commentary, and indices by Anastasius C. Bandy. *Memoirs of the American Philosophical Society* 149, Philadelphia.
- Bekker, I. (1837), *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae. Editio emendatio et copiosior consilio B.G. Niebuhrii C.f. Instituta, auctoritate Academiae Litterarum Regiae Borussicae continuata—Iohannes Lydus ex recognitione Immanuelis Bekkeri Bonnae MDCCCXXXVII*.
- Berger, A. (1997), "Regionen und Strassen in fruhen Kostantinopel," *MDAI* 47: 349–414.
- Camous, T. (2004), *Le roi et le fleuve. Ancus Marcius rex aux origines de la puissance romaine*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres.
- Champeaux, J. (1982), *Fortuna. Le culte de la Fortune à Rome et dans le monde romain des origines à la mort de Cesar, I. Fortuna dans la religion archaïque*. Roma: École Française de Rome.
- Chioffi, L. (1999), *Caro: il mercato della carne nell'Occidente romano: riflessi epigrafici ed iconografici*. Roma: L'Erma di Bretschneider.
- Coarelli, F. (1983), *Il Foro Romano. I Periodo arcaico*. Roma: Quasar.
- (1988), *Il Foro Boario. Dalle origini alla fine della Repubblica*. Roma: Quasar.
- (1988b), "I santuari, il fiume, gli empori," in A. Momigliano A. and A. Schiavone, eds., *Storia di Roma I. Roma in Italia*. Torino: Einaudi, 127–151.
- Degrassi, A. (1965), *Inscriptiones Latinae liberae rei publicae*. Firenze: Olschki.
- Domenici, I. (2007) (ed.), *Giovanni Lido, Sui segni celesti*. Milano: Medusa.
- Dubuisson, M. and J. Schamp. (2006), *Iohannes Lydus, Des magistratures de l'État romain*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres.
- Ferrary, J.-L. (2001), "À propos du fragment 90 Peter (IV, 15 Chassignet) des Origines de Caton et de la tradition varronienne sur les origines du macellum," *Rev. Phil.* 75.2: 17–27.
- Fowler, W.W. (2004), *The Roman Festivals of the Period of the Republic*. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press.
- Giuliani, C.F. (1970), *Forma italiae. Regio I—volumen septimum, Tibur, pars prima*. Roma: Olschki.
- ILLRP = Degrassi 1965
- Janin, R. (1964), *Constantinople Byzantine*. Paris: Institut Français d'Études Byzantines.
- Lethaby, W. R. and H. Swainson. (2004), *The Church of Sancta Sophia, Constantinople a Study of Byzantine Building*. Whitefish, MT: McMillan & Co.
- LTUR = *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae* (1993–2000). Oxford.
- Maas, M. (1992), *John Lydus and Roman Past: Antiquarism and Politics in the Age of Justinian*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Mason, H.J. (1974), *Greek Terms for Roman Institutions. A Lexicon and Analysis*. Toronto: Hakkert.
- Mora, F. (1995), *Il pensiero storico-religioso antico: autori greci e Roma*. Roma: Bretschneider.

- Murolo, N. (1995), "Le saline herculeae di Pompei: produzione del sale e culto di Ercole nella Campania antica," *Studi sulla Campania preromana*, Roma: Bretschneider, 105–123.
- Peruzzi, E. (1998), *Civiltà greca nel Lazio Preromano*. Firenze: Olschki.
- Richardson, L. (1992), *A New Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome*. Baltimore: JHU Press.
- Roether, W. (1827) (ed.), *Ioannis Laurentii Philadelpheni Lydi, De Mensibus quae exstant excerpta*. Textum recognovit atque emendavit e graeco in latinum convertit (...) Guilielmus Roether, (...) Lipsiae et Darmstadt.
- Rüpke, J. (1995), *Kalender und Öffentlichkeit: die Geschichte der Repräsentation und religiösen Qualifikation von Zeit in Rom*. Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Ruyt, C. de. (1983), *Macellum: Marché Alimentaire Des Romains*. Louvain-la-Neuve: Collège Érasme.
- Sonnabend, H. (1999) (ed.), *Mensch und Landschaft in der Antike. Lexikon der Historischen Geographie*. Stuttgart and Weimar: Metzler.
- ThesCRA = *Thesaurus cultus et rituum antiquorum* II. 2004. Los Angeles: The Paul Getty Museum.
- Torelli, M. (1990), "Riti di passaggio maschili di Roma arcaica," *MEFRA* 102.1: 93–106.
- (1993), "Gli aromi e il sale. Afrodite ed Eracle," in A. Mastrocinque, ed., *Eracle in Occidente Atti Conv.* (Trento, 1990), 91–117.
- Traina, G. (1992), "Sale e saline nel Mediterraneo antico," *PdP* 47.266: 363–378.
- Wuensch, R. (1967<sup>2</sup>) (ed.), *Ioannis Laurentii Lydi Liber de mensibus*, edidit Ricardus Wuensch. Lipsiae: Teubner, 1898.
- Zevi, F. (1996), "Sulle fasi più antiche di Ostia," in A. Gallina Zevi and A. Claridge, eds., *'Roman Ostia' Revisited. Archaeological and Historical Papers in Memory of Russell Meiggs*. Roma: The British School at Rome, 69–89.

# Evidence and Speculation about Ptolemy's Career in Olympiodorus

CRISTIAN TOLSA  
Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario

Our knowledge of the life of the famous mathematician Claudius Ptolemy is restricted to the meager data that can be extracted from his surviving works, mainly the fact that he made astronomical observations in Alexandria between the years AD 127–141, and that he set up an astronomical inscription in a nearby place in 146 or 147.<sup>1</sup> Ptolemy, unlike for example Galen, did not expose his personal life in his writings. In this situation, every bit of biographical evidence has an extraordinary value. This paper attempts to elucidate an intriguing piece of information about Ptolemy's career provided by the sixth-century philosopher Olympiodorus, head of the so-called Neoplatonic school of Alexandria. As we will see, there are reasons to believe that part of the data supplied by Olympiodorus is not reliable, probably consisting in a false story about Ptolemy's life originated in his school.

Since Olympiodorus refers to a particular work of Ptolemy, it will be convenient to provide a brief sketch of Ptolemy's corpus. A total of 12 treatises have survived, half of them on astronomy,<sup>2</sup> the rest on other subjects of applied mathematics such as harmonics, geography, optics, or astrology, and even epistemology. Most of the astronomical works are dedicated to a certain Syrus, about whom Ptolemy tells us nothing.

Olympiodorus' witness is in particular connected with one of the astronomical treatises, the *Canobic Inscription*. This is a short, almost tabular text, featuring astronomical parameters, originally inscribed on stone and dedicated to a "savior god" (θεῷ σωτῆρι, 2) at the suburban Alexandrian town of Canopus

---

<sup>1</sup> Keyser and Irby-Massie 2008, s.v. "Ptolemy."

<sup>2</sup> *Canobic Inscription, Almagest, Planetary Hypotheses, Handy Tables, Phases of the Fixed Stars, Analemma, Planispherium.*

(ἀνετέθη ἐν τῷ Κανώβῳ, 7). However, only the text has reached us, preserved in the manuscript tradition of the *Almagest*.<sup>3</sup>

The context in Olympiodorus is his commentary on Plato's *Phaedo*, and more precisely the explanation of Socrates' argument that all pairs of opposites are generated the one out of the other. One of Socrates' examples is that the state of sleep is generated out of the state of waking by the process of falling asleep, in the same manner as the state of waking is generated out of the state of sleep by the process of waking up.<sup>4</sup> Commenting along these lines, Olympiodorus explains that Socrates argues from three main points (τριχόθεν, 10.4.2): collecting numerous opposites that are shown to be generated one out of the other; showing that the processes that lead to the opposite notion also become the opposite process (in the example above, falling asleep becomes waking up); and finally using an argument about nature, namely that if this alternation did not take place, there would be no generation, since everything would remain the same forever (*Phaed.* 72b). At this point, Olympiodorus repeats Socrates' point that if sleep would not become waking (οὐκέτι καὶ τὸ καθεύδειν εἰς τὸ ἐγρηγορέναι, 10.4.14) the story of Endymion would have no sense, since all of us would sleep forever (*Phaed.* 72bc). But, unlike Plato, Olympiodorus takes the trouble to explain who Endymion is, and here is where Ptolemy finally appears, functioning as a parallel for the mythical figure (10.4.11–14):<sup>5</sup>

He [Endymion] was said (ἐλέγετο) to be always sleeping, because he passed his life doing astronomy in isolation (διότι ἀστρονομῶν ἐπ' ἐρημίας διέτριβεν), hence [he was said to be] (διὸ καὶ) lover of the Moon. This they say (φασίν) too of Ptolemy, because he lived for 40 years in the so-called wings of Canopus (πτεροῖς τοῦ Κανώβου) studying astronomy (ἀστρονομία σχολάζων), hence (διὸ καὶ) he engraved the stelae there with his discovered astronomical doctrines (ἀνεγράψατο τὰς στήλας ἐκεῖ τῶν εὐρημένων αὐτῷ ἀστρονομικῶν δογμάτων).

The myth of Endymion was well-known enough in antiquity as to have many different versions, of which the most common theme was the eternal sleep of the

<sup>3</sup> The line numbers refer to the last edition, Jones 2005.

<sup>4</sup> *Phaed.* 71c–d.

<sup>5</sup> My own translation: ἐλέγετο δὲ οὗτος ἀεὶ καθεύδειν, διότι ἀστρονομῶν ἐπ' ἐρημίας διέτριβεν, διὸ καὶ φίλος τῇ Σελήνῃ. ὁ καὶ περὶ Πτολεμαίου φασίν· οὗτος γὰρ ἐπὶ μ' ἔτη ἐν τοῖς λεγομένοις Πτεροῖς τοῦ Κανώβου ᾧκει ἀστρονομία σχολάζων, διὸ καὶ ἀνεγράψατο τὰς στήλας ἐκεῖ τῶν εὐρημένων αὐτῷ ἀστρονομικῶν δογμάτων.

youth caused by the Moon's love for him.<sup>6</sup> The usual story is that Endymion was a beautiful sleeping shepherd approached by the Moon, which fell in love with him and made him remain forever in the same state. However, already Pliny, long before Olympiodorus, assumed the youth was an astronomer rather than a shepherd, arguing like him that astronomy was the reason of the Moon's love.<sup>7</sup> Olympiodorus' previous reasoning seems a bit odd, since he apparently presents isolated astronomical activity as the cause of his eternal sleep. This can however be understood in a broad sense, taking into account the story of the Moon's love that follows in the account: Endymion came to be always sleeping because he was always doing astronomy in isolation, which resulted in the Moon falling in love with him and making him sleep forever.

Immediately thereafter Olympiodorus says that about Ptolemy they also say "this" (ὅ), which poses an interpretative problem of difficult solution. There are three possibilities for the antecedent of this relative: (1) to be always asleep, (2) to have passed his life doing astronomy in isolation, and (3) to be the lover of the Moon. All of them are syntactically possible, and we may find arguments in favor of each of them. The first interpretation would be favored by the parallel syntactical structure of the two periods (ἐλέγετο ... διότι ... διὸ καὶ ... / φασὶν ... γὰρ ... διὸ καὶ ...), although we should perhaps not attach too much weight to such thing: as a matter of fact, Olympiodorus' lectures are generally written as long sequences of causal phrases without an exceedingly precise hierarchy. The third possibility could be argued for on the basis that the relative frequently refers to what comes last in the narrative, which is in this case the love of the Moon. The less fantastic interpretation is the second one, according to which it was said of Ptolemy that he passed his life doing astronomy in isolation, like Endymion, because he lived for 40 years in the wings of Canopus studying astronomy. However, as we will see, even in this latter interpretation there is a probable element of myth. But before going on with this analysis, it will be convenient to inquire about the place where Olympiodorus situates Ptolemy's inscription.

<sup>6</sup> Apoll. *Bibl.* 1.7.5–6 tells the story of the Moon's love for Endymion and that Zeus granted him whatever he wanted, which was eternal sleep (not making any explicit connection between both stories); Theocr. *Id.* 3.50 (eternal sleep), 20.37 (love of the Moon); Luc. *Musc.* 10 draws a link between the Moon's love and the quietness she required in Endymion's sleep in order to love him; Apoll. *Rhod. Arg.* 4.58 (Moon's love), etc.

<sup>7</sup> Plin. *HN* 2.43: *quae singula in ea deprehendit hominum primus Endymion; ob id amor eius fama traditur.*

### 1. *The wings of Canopus*

The astronomical stelae to which Olympiodorus alludes in his conclusion very probably consist of the above-mentioned *Canobic Inscription*. The manuscript tradition of the *Almagest*, where the text of the inscription is preserved, suggests that Olympiodorus' school was involved in copying down the text as preliminary material of the *Almagest*; past scholars even suggested that the text of the inscription was falsely attributed to Ptolemy by the school, and that Olympiodorus' reference to it was consciously deceitful, until it was proved that Ptolemy implicitly referred to the inscription in the *Almagest*.<sup>8</sup>

Now let us inquire what place Olympiodorus had in mind when using the expression "wings of Canopus." As noted above, in the inscription Ptolemy recorded the place simply as "Canopus," so that the wings of Canopus seem to have been a more precise place in that town. Olympiodorus' passage establishes a parallel between Endymion's study of astronomy in isolation (ἐπ' ἐρημίας) and Ptolemy's, suggesting that the place where Ptolemy conducted his research was isolated or deserted. For this reason Jones (2005, 64) proposed that the wings of Canopus were an "outlying and sparsely inhabited site close to Canopus." Jones adduced two further testimonies for the expression, which are worth revisiting here.

On the one hand, there is a passage of Leontius of Neapolis' *Life of John the Almsgiver* where a man named Sabinos had a vision of the saint on the day of the latter's death (AD 619, cf. Jones 2005, 63). This man is described by Leontius as virtuous (ἐνάρετος) and "following the angelic republic and fashion" (τὴν ἀγγελικὴν πολιτείαν καὶ σχῆμα), thus a sort of monk, and living "in Alexandria in the so-called wings of Canopus" (ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ οἰκῶν ἐν τοῖς λεγομένοις Πτεροῖς Κανώβου).<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, Leontius' information matches the historical notice of Eunapius (4th century) about monks having been established in the Canopic region after the destruction of the temples in the reign of Theodosius (τοὺς δὲ μοναχοὺς τούτους καὶ εἰς τὸν Κάνωβον καθίδρυσαν, VS 6.11.8), as well as the mention of monasteries in Canopus in the *Chronographia* of Theophanes (ἐν τοῖς μοναστηρίοις τοῦ Κανώπου, *Chronographia* 121 De Boor). As regards

<sup>8</sup> References in Jones 2005, 62; the relationship between the *Almagest* and the inscription was discovered by Hamilton et al. 1987.

<sup>9</sup> Vit. Ioan. 408. That the wings of Canopus are said to be a part of Alexandria is probably a result of the increasing size of the city through the centuries; see the analysis in Stolz 2008. There is no town in between, and while Strabo sets their distance at a rough equivalent of 22 km, the late ancient sources report ca. 16 km. Actually, the short distance between both places makes it impossible to decide whether Ptolemy's astronomical observations were made from Alexandria or Canopus: cf. Jones 2005, 64.

Olympiodorus' account, his suggestion that the place was isolated fits Leontius' report of a monk living in there shortly after his own time (Olympiodorus' death is set *ca.* AD 570).

On the other hand, Jones also brought up an old scholion on a passage of Aelius Aristides' *Panathenaicus* describing the strong impression that Athens causes to those who approach it by sea.<sup>10</sup> In particular, the scholiast comments on Aristides' phrase "the soul is cleansed in advance (*προκαθαίρεται*), becomes elevated (*μετέωρος*) and light (*κούφη*)" and his comparison with the initiation in temples (*ὥσπερ ἐν ἱεροῖς προτελουμένη*, *Panath.* 97). Firstly, he explains the word *προτελουμένη* as *μουμένη* (another word for "initiated"), comparing the islands with preliminary rituals (*προτέλεια*) and the Attic region with the ritual itself (*τελετήν*). This geographical allegory is already used by Aristides in the previous lines of his discourse, where he compares the Cyclades and the Sporades around the Attica to suburban entries to the city (*προαστείων τῇ πόλει*), to a chorus (*χοροῦ σχῆμα*), to the propylaea of the palaces (*τοῖς βασιλείοις τὰ προπύλαια*) and to stars that enclose the moon (*σελήνην ἀστέρες ἐγκλείουσι*, *Panath.* 96). Now comes the mention of the wings of Canopus: the scholiast proceeds to justify Aristides' reference to the "light" quality of the soul (*τὸ δὲ κοῦφον*) pointing out that "the temples (*τὰ ἱερά*) had something built together (*τινα συνφοδομημένα*), indicating that the initiate should become elevated (*μετέωρον γίνεσθαι*); hence the Egyptians say 'the wings of Canopus'."

Jones (2005, 63) hesitantly dismissed this testimonium on the basis that the scholiast's "rationalization of the *συνφοδομημένα* as signifying to initiates some sort of elevation seems to point to an architectural feature or motif, for example on the roof, certainly not a potential dwelling." However, I think it is possible to match all the pieces of the puzzle. For this, it will be useful to review Boulliau's analysis in the first modern edition of the inscription—the most complete study on the possible meaning of the wings of Canopus—incorporating the evidence from the passages adduced by Jones.

Boulliau believed that the wings of Canopus were porticoes in the temple of Serapis at Canopus, where Ptolemy would also have conducted his astronomical observations. In support of this hypothesis, Boulliau presented a number of ancient sources proving that the winged roofs of ancient Greek temples were called "wings" (*περά*).<sup>11</sup> There are at least two other ancient testimonia attesting the

<sup>10</sup> Dindorf *Scholia vetera Panath.* 97.7: ὥσπερ ἐν ἱεροῖς προτελουμένη] ἀντὶ τοῦ μουμένη, ἵνα εἴπῃ προτέλεια μὲν τὰς νήσους, αὐτὴν δὲ τὴν Ἀττικὴν τελετήν. τὸ δὲ κοῦφον, ὅτι τὰ ἱερά εἶχόν τινα συνφοδομημένα, σημαίνοντα ὡς δεῖ μετέωρον γίνεσθαι τὸν μουμένον. ὁθεν καὶ οἱ ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ τὰ περά τοῦ Κανώβου φασί.

<sup>11</sup> Bullialdus 1663, 209–210: Eustathius commenting on Homer (*Comm.II.* 4.911), a scholiast on Aristophanes (ed. Koster v. 1110), the *Suda* (s.v. ἀετώματα), Galen commenting

use of “wings” or “wing” for a prominent roof of a monumental building. On the one side, Procopius in his *De aedificiis* tells us of soldiers taking shelter under a building called “wings” (πτερά). He writes that a structure erected by the emperor Justinian along the wall of the city of Zenobia to provide protection to men fighting there was called “wings” (πτερά), because “it seems to hang out from the wall” (ἀποκρέμασθαι τοῦ τείχους δοκεῖ) (*De aed.* 2.8.14.5). On the other hand, Pliny says that the “wing” (*pteron*) of the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus was the “circumference” (*circumitum*) of the monument (*NH* 36.30), meaning according to archaeologists “the part of the building one walks around [...] that part of the building which was decorated by the four famous sculptors” (Jeppesen and Luttrell 1986, 51). This part was the colonnade, a structure akin to the wings in Greek-style temples.

According to Boulliau (1663, 211), the “wings” of the temple where Ptolemy would have dedicated the inscription were probably of Greek style (*artis architectonicae Graecae regulas fuisse constructa verisimile est*). Furthermore, he suggested that this was an apt place for Ptolemy to put his instruments (*instrumenta sua collocasse*), and adduced a parallel in the equinoctial ring which Ptolemy used in Alexandria, which was situated in a portico, as mentioned by himself in the *Almagest* (ἐν τῇ τετραγώνῳ καλουμένῃ στοᾷ, 3.1=1.195–197 Heiberg). Now the fundamental question would be: what temple would have contained the “wings of Canopus”? That the temple in question was that of Serapis was justified by Boulliau (1663, 205–206) with the argument that Ptolemy’s dedication to a “savior god” (θεῷ σωτῆρι) accords well with the fame of the temple of Serapis at Canopus—a sanctuary described by Strabo as a reputed health center where incubation took place (17.1.17)—and with the curative power attributed to Serapis by the Alexandrians (Tacitus *Histories* 4.81).

But the question is not that simple: Boulliau himself discussed three ancient testimonia attesting for Canopus a cult of the eponymous founding hero of the city, Menelaus’ helmsman Canopus:<sup>12</sup> Epiphanius, Rufinus, and the Suda.<sup>13</sup> He finally discarded a supposed temple dedicated to Canopus as the seat of Ptolemy’s inscription on the basis that if Strabo (*authorem diligentissimum*, 205) did not mention it then this temple must have been far less important than that of Serapis, to which he attributed such a great fame and multitude of cults (*famae*

---

on Hippocrates (*Linguarum seu dictionum exoletarum Hippocratis explicatio* 19.70), and Vitruvius (3.2.5).

<sup>12</sup> The story of the town’s foundation is recounted in a variety of sources: Strabo 17.1.17, Ael. Aristid. *Aegypt.* 359 (mentioning Hecataeus of Miletus as a source), Ael. Her. 3.1.139, Eustath. *Comm. Dionys.* 11.

<sup>13</sup> Bullialdus 1663, 204; Epiphani. *Ancor.* 106, Ruf. *Hist.Eccl.* 11.26 (PL 21.534–535), Suda s.v. Κάνωπος.



*claritudine & cultorum agmine*, 206; cf. Strab. πολλῇ ἀγιστεῖα τιμώμενον). However, the only archeologically attested sanctuary at Canopus is the *temenos* of a temple dedicated to Osiris, of which the golden foundation plaque remains; it was founded by Ptolemy III Euergetes and Berenice in 244 B.C.<sup>14</sup>

Rufinus of Aquileia in the passage adduced by Boulliau related the cult of Canopus to the so-called Canopic images, vase-like objects surmounted by a human head, represented in surviving objects from the second half of the first century AD onwards, like terracottas, stone figures, Alexandrian coins, and bone tesserae.<sup>15</sup> Such bone tesserae, having the inscription “Canopus” on their reverse, show the Canopic image before the pylon of an Egyptian temple, the same picture appearing on Alexandrian coins. Now, since Osiris had a temple dedicated at Canopus, and because of Osiris’ connection with after-life and with water—this deity symbolized the flood of the Nile<sup>16</sup>—it seems likely that the Canopic image was venerated in the context of the cult of Osiris at Canopus, and in the temple of Osiris.<sup>17</sup> This temple, according to the depiction on the coins and the bone tokens, would have been of Egyptian style.<sup>18</sup>

Since it would be odd that Strabo did not mention this apparently important cult, it seems plausible that the cult of Osiris-Canopus was included in or related to the cult of Serapis. Some evidence of this may be found in the literary sources: on the one hand, Plutarch in his text *On Isis and Osiris* almost casually

<sup>14</sup> Meyboom 1995, 333 n. 192 (with references). However, before 270 BC a shrine for Isis and Anubis was dedicated in Canopus, which might imply that a temple for Serapis was already there by then: it is this temple to which Apollonius Rhodius (*fl.* first half of 3rd c. BC) may have referred when mentioning a Corinthian colonnade at Canopus: cf. Meyboom 1995 *ibid.*, Fraser 1972 vol. 2, 421, n. 634, Apoll. Rhod. fr. 1 (=Steph. Byz. *Ethn.* 374). Alternatively, this could also have referred to a Greek-style shrine within any temple complex, as for example the so-called *lychnaption* on the *dromos* of the Egyptian Serapeum of Memphis, erected in the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphus: cf. McKenzie 2007, 119.

<sup>15</sup> Meyboom 1995, 331 n. 188; Panofsky 1961, 195–196. These objects are not to be confused with the visceral jars, which seem not to have outlasted the Egyptian New Kingdom (Panofsky 1961, *ibid.*); nevertheless, the latter have been commonly named by modern archaeologists “Canopic jars” in account of their resemblance with the Canopic object cult, which actually probably derived from them.

<sup>16</sup> Meyboom 1995 130, 300 n. 88; Panofsky 1961, 195. In this context we can understand Stephanus Byzantius’ correction of Strabo’s description of the cult of Canopus, stating that the god venerated was the sea-god Poseidon: cf. Panofsky 1961, *ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Panofsky 1961, 195. As a matter of fact, Rufinus noted the importance of water in relation to the Canopus-images venerated at Canopus (*Hist.Ecc.* 11.26).

<sup>18</sup> Meyboom 1995, 54; McKenzie 2007, 61. There were three styles of temples depicted on Alexandrian coins, Egyptian, Greco-Egyptian, and classical: the temple of Isis in Alexandria was also depicted in the Egyptian style; cf. McKenzie 2007, 185.

switches Osiris with Serapis when he notes, speaking of Osiris, that some identify Serapis with Pluto, adding that these people thought the “oracle of Canopus” to be actually an oracle of Pluto (*Isid.* 361E–F). It may not be a mere coincidence that some lines thereafter Plutarch actually defends the identification of Osiris with Serapis (362B). Possibly the introduction of Serapis above in connection with Canopus suggests that Plutarch conceived the cult of Serapis at Canopus as a version of the cult of Osiris. In this context, it seems significant that Rufinus at the end of his account on the cult of the hero Canopus apparently implies that the temple where this cult took place was a temple of Serapis. Indeed, he mentions the construction of a church and a martyrium in the “tomb of Serapis” (*in Serapidis sepulchro*, 11.27), once the temples had been destroyed (*profanis aedibus complanatis*).<sup>19</sup> Another witness to such special character of the Serapis sanctuary at Canopus is provided by Pausanias, who records two temples of Serapis in the acropolis of Corinth, one of them dedicated to Serapis “in Canopus” (δύο Σαράπιδος, ἐν Κανώβῳ καλουμένου τὸ ἔτερον, 2.4.6).<sup>20</sup>

Let us now come back to the wings of Canopus. Apart from the testimonia of “wings” applied to the roofs of Greek-style temples, Boulliau also noted a couple of ancient testimonia applied to Egyptian-style temple-complexes: Strabo’s description of the parts of an Egyptian temple, and Pliny’s description of the Egyptian labyrinth.<sup>21</sup> Strabo states that the walls on either side of the entrance court of the Egyptian temples are called “wings” (πτερά).<sup>22</sup> Perhaps the explanation for this name resides in the fact that these walls are normally porticated, similarly as the wings of Greek-style temples. The case of Pliny is obvi-

<sup>19</sup> As Grossman notes, it is likely that Rufinus referred to both the temple of Canopus and to that of Alexandria, of which he has spoken before, since the martyrium was mentioned in other late ancient sources, and was situated in the center of the city of Alexandria, not at the side of Canopus; Grossman 2008, 303.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Meyboom 1995, 331 n. 188.

<sup>21</sup> Bullialdus 1663, 210–211; Strab. 17.1.28, Plin. *HN* 36.88.

<sup>22</sup> Strabo’s description (17.1.28) may appear somewhat obscure, although it is easy to follow if we have a plan of any Egyptian temple before us: he follows the order of a visitor entering the temple, mentioning first the foundations of the temple (ἔδαφος) as one enters the *temenos*, then the processional way (ὁρόμος) surrounded by sphinxes, then an indeterminate number of propylaea (οὐκ ἔστι δὲ διωρισμένος ἀριθμὸς οὔτε τῶν προπύλων), and then the *pronaos* (πρόναον) that is the open court one finds before the first hypostyle court. Strabo says that the walls called “wings” on either side of the court are initially separated a little more than the breadth of the foundation of the temple (μικρὸν πλεόν ἢ τὸ πλάτος ἐστὶ τῆς κρηπίδος τοῦ νεώ), and then bend to each other (ἔπειτ’ εἰς τὸ πρόσθεν προϊόντι κατ’ ἐπινευούσας γραμμάς). Looking at the plan of an Egyptian temple it is easy to see that this means the ninety-degree angle that these walls turn when they arrive at the point of the hypostyle court, which is a little narrower than the breadth of the walls.

ously more complicated because there is no strong evidence of the structure of the labyrinth, even if it has been identified with the pyramid-complex of the Twelfth Dynasty king Amenemhat III.<sup>23</sup> Pliny informs that at the outer side of the wall of the labyrinth (*rursus extra murum*) there is a mass of buildings (*aedificiorum moles*) which they call “wing” (*pteron*), beneath which there are passages (*perfossis cuniculis*). It seems plausible that these passages correspond to what Strabo in his description of the Egyptian labyrinth calls “crypts” (κρυπαί, 17.1.37), covered by single slabs (μονολίθοις ὡσαύτως ἐστέγασται), because he says that they lead to the entrances (πρόκεινται δὲ τῶν εἰσόδων κρυπαί τινες), which are likewise situated just opposite the wall (αἱ δ' εἰς αὐτὰς [to the inner courts] ὁδοὶ καταντικρὺ τοῦ τείχους εἰσὶ). Pomponius Mela, similarly, says that there are winding porticoes (*revocatis porticibus*, 1.56) covering the paths that lead to the wall of the labyrinth.

If I am right, both the wings of Egyptian temples (according to Strabo) and the wing of the Egyptian labyrinth (according to Pliny) seem to be porticated entrances leading to more interior parts of the sanctuary. In the case of the standard Egyptian temples this more interior part would be the hypostyle court, and in the case of the labyrinth, the twelve famous roofed courts (αὐλαὶ κατάστεγοι, Herodotus 2.148).

Let us now consider again the scholion on Aristides' *Panathenaicus*. For the scholiast, the soul is light because the temples had some structures built together (τινα συνφοδομημένα) that indicated that the initiate should become elevated (μετέωρον γίνεσθαι), and that this is why people in Egypt say “the wings of Canopus.” But the scholion began explaining the term “initiated” (προτελουμένη), illuminating it through Aristides' identification of the islands in front of the Attica as “preliminary rituals” (προτέλεια) coming before the Attica itself, which was the “ritual” (τελετήν). Then it seems plausible that when the scholiast mentions the temples in which the soul is initiated (προτελουμένη), explaining Aristides' phrase “as initiated in the temples,” he understands by these structures built together in temples some sort of entrance, pursuing the geographical metaphor. Given that the context is Athens, it is not implausible that the scholiast was thinking of the propylaea of the acropolis—Aristides himself has previously compared the islands around the Attica to propylaea of palaces. The height of the propylaea could also explain the relation established by the scholiast with the elevation of the initiate. Furthermore, one of the functions of propylaea was to prohibit the entrance to those who were impure, for example because of blood

<sup>23</sup> See e.g. Uphill 2000.

crimes, which would fit the meaning of spiritual purity which “elevated” (μετέωρος) and “light” (κοῦφος) had for Christian authors.<sup>24</sup>

The rest of my argument is simple now: the Egyptian-style temple of Osiris at Canopus (the temple of Canopus or just “Canopus” according to the bone tesserae), was probably destroyed to some extent in the age of Theodosius (the end of the 4th century), but not necessarily the entrance court enclosed by the “wings” (πτερά) and the pylon. In the Serapeum of Alexandria, destroyed by the same time,<sup>25</sup> we have a nice example of a similar porticated structure preserved into the Byzantine times, the porticated colonnade surrounding the temple (McKenzie et al. 2004, 108). We may be facing a similar scenario in Canopus: in there, the high pylon at the entrance of the court may have inspired the scholiast’s comparison with the structures that suggest elevation, and this along with the whole initiation context would have provided him with an explanation for the name “wings” that this place would have received in late antiquity. As regards the testimonium of the monk living in the wings, it is easy to imagine that the pylon of the ancient temple of Serapis/Osiris and its court would make an appropriate living for monks after the cult had been destroyed, having in mind that occupation of pagan sites by monks was encouraged by that time.<sup>26</sup>

Finally back to Olympiodorus’ account, the fact that the wings of Canopus would have been the entrance court of the temple would explain the implied isolation in his comparison with Endymion. Since the wings would be situated in the middle of the temple enclosure, it is likely that there were not many buildings in the area—all would have had to be constructed only after the destruction of the cult—so that the place would have appeared as a deserted place. Furthermore, the meager evidence on the original context of dedications in Egyptian temples suggests that the entrance court was an appropriate place for votive stelae like Ptolemy’s to be dedicated.<sup>27</sup> Perhaps it was still *in situ* or deposited on the wall or in the pylon by the time of Olympiodorus.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Evagrius, *De octo spiritibus malitiae*, PL 79.1152 (speaking of a poor monk in contrast to a rich one): Παντὸς πειρασμοῦ ὁ τοιοῦτός ἐστιν ὑψηλότερος, καταγελαῖ τῶν παρόντων, καὶ μετέωρος ἐξαίρεται, ἀναχωρεῖ τῶν γῆινων, καὶ συμπεριπολεῖ τοῖς ἀνωπτερόν γάρ ἐχει κοῦφον.

<sup>25</sup> According to the same sources which account for the destruction of the Canopic sanctuary, Rufinus *Hist. Eccl.* 11.27 (PL 21.535–536) and Eunapius *Vit. Soph.* 6.11.1–2.

<sup>26</sup> We can read for example in the *Historia monachorum in Aegypto* (5) that in Oxyrhynchus the ancient temples had been occupied by monks, who were living all around the city, even in the towers of the town gates. Cf. the above-mentioned information by Eunapius (*Vit. Soph.* 6.11.6) that monks were established in Canopus immediately after the destruction.

<sup>27</sup> Pinch and Waraksa 2009, 6.

## 2. The 40-year career

Let us now turn to the rest of the information transmitted by Olympiodorus, which is that Ptolemy lived for 40 years in the wings studying astronomy. For Boulliau (1663, 206–207), this information was credible on the basis that Olympiodorus was a serious author (*authore probatissimo, philosopho sapientissimo testo*) and that he seemed to know about the inscription (*ob proxime notatam & indicatam in Olympiodori verbis circumstantiam*). On the other hand, Jones (2005, 64) thinks 40 years is a plausible number for Ptolemy's career, admitting that it "could simply be a conventional figure for a long career." However, if we accept that the wings of Canopus were the court and the pylon of the temple, there is an evident difficulty in accepting this information: with the temple in use it is implausible that someone lived in there. On the other hand, if Boulliau's suggestion was right and Ptolemy would have been a priest living in the temple (*in Serapidis pteris habitasse [...] Serapidis sacerdotem fuisse suspicari nec absurdum, nec a vero absonum est*, 207), it would not be understandable why the location was not signaled as "the temple of Canopus," the court and pylon obviously not constituting an appropriate dwelling for a priest.

This was obviously not the situation after the destruction of the temple, since we know that shortly after the time of Olympiodorus a monk was living in there. In what follows I will argue that the saying about Ptolemy's life which Olympiodorus transmits is probably a legend portraying Ptolemy as a monk living in the wings of Canopus, perhaps inspired by the dedication of his inscription "to the savior god" (θεῷ σωτηρί)—which could have been taken as dedicated to the Christian God—and by the fact that the place where the inscription was situated was inhabited by monks.

I think the key lies in paying attention to Olympiodorus' mode of expression when he delivers his report about Ptolemy's life. Indeed, the information that Ptolemy lived for 40 years in the wings of Canopus (introduced by γάρ) may be understood not as Olympiodorus' own explanation of the saying about Ptolemy, but as part of the actual saying, this is, as indirect speech, which in Greek needs not be specially marked. Thus we could read: "This they say of Ptolemy, too, 'because [they say] he lived for 40 years in the so-called wings of Canopus'." Actually, we have seen that the parallel justification for the saying about Endymion (introduced by διότι) was a traditional explanation already found in Pliny, thus not necessarily Olympiodorus' own. In contrast, what comes next both in Endymion's clause and Ptolemy's seems more likely Olympiodorus' own conclusion drawn from the reported hypotheses: "hence (διὸ καὶ) they say

that Endymion is the lover of the Moon”; “hence (διὸ καὶ) he [=Ptolemy] engraved the stelae (...).”<sup>28</sup>

We can contrast Olympiodorus’ bare delivering of this biographical report with a passage in the prologue of his commentary on Plato’s *Gorgias* where it is carefully demonstrated—in no less than 12 lines—through the use of chronological reports that Plato and Gorgias were contemporaries.<sup>29</sup> In the case we are examining, the impression is rather that the information about Ptolemy’s 40 years in the wings is the report itself, which serves as the *comparandum* for the story about Endymion’s entire life “doing astronomy in isolation.”

There is actually one clue as to the possible origin of this saying about Ptolemy’s life. The number of years (40) that Ptolemy is supposed to have spent in the wings of Canopus is a typical figure for the time of retirement in the Egyptian desert of Christian monks, the so-called desert fathers, inspired in the biblical precedent of the number of years of the Jews’ wandering in the same place. We find many instances of this period of retirement in the major late ancient texts about Egyptian monachal life.<sup>30</sup> Although this number of years also played a role in Greek biographical writing as the value for the *akme* of one’s life and for the length of a generation,<sup>31</sup> the context in Olympiodorus—the comparison with the isolation of Endymion, and the meaning of the wings of Canopus—rather suggests a monastic context. Olympiodorus was a teacher of Greek philosophy in Alexandria in an overwhelmingly Christian society, his students being probably mostly Christian.<sup>32</sup> So it seems plausible that previously in his school the legend of a Christian Ptolemy had arisen out of the evidence of Ptolemy’s *Canobic Inscription*, specifically its dedication and the place where it was found. Christian occupation of the pagan sites lying back already one and a half centuries by Olympiodorus’ time, the image of a Christian Ptolemy would perhaps not have been shocking. Furthermore, the fact that probably nothing was known about Ptolemy’s life must have encouraged speculation, as we find it for

<sup>28</sup> This use of διὸ καὶ for Olympiodorus’ own conclusion is seen most clearly in cases where particular phrasings of the author he is commenting on constitute the conclusion itself, as in *Comm.Phaed.* 13.19.4–5: ὥς γὰρ πρὸς τὰ μετεχόμενα πάσχει τὰ μετέχοντα· διὸ καὶ τὸ ὄν ‘πεπονθέναι’ λέγει τὸ ἐν ὥς μετέχον τοῦ ἐνός.

<sup>29</sup> *Olymp. Comm.Gorg.* 9.4–16.

<sup>30</sup> *Historia Monachorum in Aegypto* 8.19, τεσσαράκοντα ἔτη ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ διατελέσας; Pall. *Laus.* 18.7, ὁδηγήσαντι τὸν Ἰσραὴλ τεσσαράκοντα ἔτη ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ, 23.3, τεσσαρακοστὸν ἔτος ἔχω ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ κέλλῃ, 45.2, ἐνεκαρτέρησεν ἐν ἐνὶ μοναστηρίῳ τεσσαράκοντα ἔτη; *Apophthegmata patrum (alph.)* 244.44, ἐν ἀκροτάτῃ ἐρήμῳ διάγοντι ἐπὶ ἔτη τεσσαράκοντα.

<sup>31</sup> See Polman 1974, 171–172.

<sup>32</sup> For Olympiodorus and his promotion of Hellenism in the hostile Christian context, see Tarrant 1997.

example in a late ancient anonymous commentary on the *Tetrabiblos*, where it is reported that Ptolemy's dedicatee Syrus was thought by some to have been fabricated (πέπλασται) by Ptolemy, and alternatively that others ventured he was a physician versed in mathematics, both clearly speculative guesses despite the fact that there were no clues as to who Syrus might have been.<sup>33</sup>

Important evidence sustaining my claim that the inscription was interpreted as a dedication to the Christian god comes from the received text itself, whose archetype goes back to the time of Olympiodorus (Jones 2005, 54). In all the branches of the manuscript tradition the word "god" in the first line of the text is written as a *nomen sacrum*, ΘΩ, a practice which is distinctive of Christian inscriptions and manuscripts (Hurtado 1998, 660). The transcriber(s) of the text must then have taken the inscription to be obviously Christian, reverentially abbreviating the term in the copy.

To sum up, I have argued that the wings of Canopus, which Olympiodorus identifies as the place where Ptolemy's *Canobic Inscription* was set up, were probably the entrance court of the Egyptian-style temple of Serapis/Osiris at Canopus. On the other hand, the information that Ptolemy spent 40 years living in that place, reported in the same passage, seems to be a fiction arising out of the Christian milieu of Olympiodorus' school, an attempt to make a biographical point from the evidence of the *Canobic Inscription*.

### References

- Bullialdus, I. (1663), *Claudii Ptolemaei Tractatus de iudicandi facultate et animi principatu*. Paris: Cramoisy.
- Boll, F. (1894), "Studien über Claudius Ptolemäus," *Jahrbücher für Classische Philologie*. Suppl. Bd. 21: 49–244.
- Fraser, P.M. (1972), *Ptolemaic Alexandria*. 3 Vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Grossman, P. (2008), "Modalitäten der Zerstörung und Christianisierung pharaonischer Tempelanlagen," in eds. J. Hahn, S. Emmel, and U. Gotter, *From Temple to Church: Destruction and Renewal of Local Cultic Topography in Late Antiquity*, 229–334. Leiden and Boston: Brill.
- Hamilton, N. T., N. M. Swerdlow, and G. J. Toomer. (1987), "The Canobic Inscription: Ptolemy's Earliest Work," in eds. J. L. Bergren and B. R. Goldstein, *From Ancient Omens to Statistical Mechanics*. Copenhagen: Copenhagen University Library.
- Hurtado, L.W. (1998), "The Origin of the Nomina Sacra: A proposal," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 117.4: 655–673.
- Jeppesen, K. and A. Luttrell. (1986), *The Maussolleion at Halikarnassos Vol. 2: Reports of the Danish Archaeological Expedition to Bodrum: The Written Sources and Their Archaeological Background*. Copenhagen: Nordisk Forlag.

<sup>33</sup> *Anon. in Tetr.* 1; Boll 1894, 67 n. 2.

- Jones, A. (2005), "Ptolemy's Canobic Inscription and Heliodorus' Observation Reports," *SCIAMVS* 6: 53–98.
- Keyser, P. and G. Irby-Massie. (2008) (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Ancient Natural Scientists: the Greek Tradition and its Many Heirs*. London: Routledge.
- McKenzie, J. (2007), *The Architecture of Alexandria and Egypt, c.300 BC to AD 700*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- McKenzie, J. S., S. Gibson, and A. T. Reyes. (2004), "Reconstructing the Serapeum in Alexandria from the Archaeological Evidence," *Journal of Roman Studies* 94: 73–121.
- Meyboom, P. G. P. (1995), *The Nile Mosaic of Palestrina: Early Evidence of Egyptian Religion in Italy*. Leiden: Brill.
- Panofsky, E. (1961), "'Canopus Deus': The Iconography of a Non-Existent God," *Gazette des Beaux* 57: 193–216.
- Pinch, G. and E. A. Waraksa. (2009), "Votive practices," in eds., J. Dieleman and W. Wendrich, *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, Los Angeles. <http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz001nfbgg>
- Polman, G. H. (1974), "Biography and Akme in Plutarch," *Classical Philology* 69.3: 169–177.
- Stolz, Y. (2008), "Kanopos oder Menouthis? Zur Identifikation einer Ruinenstätte in der Bucht von Abuqir in Ägypten," *Klio* 90: 193–207.
- Tarrant, H. (1997), "Olympiodorus and the Surrender of Paganism," in ed. L. Garland, *Conformity and Non-Conformity in Byzantium*, Amsterdam: Hakkert, 181–192.
- Uphill, E. P. (2000), *Pharaoh's Gateway to Eternity: The Hawara Labyrinth of King Amenemhat III*. London: Paul International.



# VI

## Early Christian Works



## Mar Saba 65: Twelve Enduring Misconceptions

SCOTT BROWN  
Toronto

Fifty-seven years have passed now since Morton Smith visited the Orthodox monastery of Mar Saba in the Judean desert and catalogued a manuscript of a letter by Clement of Alexandria “to Theodore,” penned in an eighteenth-century documentary hand at the end of an old printed book. In this Greek letter Clement replies to Theodore’s query about a different and disturbing form of the Gospel of Mark that has become known to him through his debates with Carpocratians. Clement responds that this different version of Mark is indeed real, but the form of it used by the Carpocratians is not. The truth, he explains, is that the evangelist Mark came to Alexandria following Peter’s death and created a “more spiritual gospel for the use of those who were being perfected” by adding to his Roman gospel “the things suitable to those studies which make for progress toward knowledge” (I.18–22). This “mystical gospel” (μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον), however, was later stolen by Carpocrates and adulterated to make it support his own “blasphemous and carnal doctrine” (II.4–9). Accordingly, the true mystical gospel did not contain the many things that Theodore had asked about, such as the phrase “naked man with naked man.” To prove this, Clement quoted “word for word” one of the adulterated stories, a Markan account of the raising of Lazarus, which appears before the words “And James and John come to him” (Mark 10:35), and a brief note about Jesus refusing to receive three women, which occurs after the words “And he comes to Jericho” (10:46a; *Letter to Theodore* II.21–III.18).

There have been many attempts over the years to prove this text a forgery, and just as many attempts to defend it. What have been lacking are rigorous attempts to understand the evidence on its own terms: to see what it would mean—and whether it indeed makes sense—as a work of Clement describing a mystical Gospel of Mark. Instead, scholars on both sides of the debate have normally begun with assumptions about the meaning and purpose of the letter,

the nature and life setting of this gospel, and what all (or little) would be involved in forging the whole document. They also have not been as critical as they could be in accepting or rejecting what others have written on this subject. The unfortunate consequence is that much of what people believe they know about the *Letter to Theodore* and the “secret” Gospel of Mark is poorly supported or just plain false. This paper will outline some of the more prominent misconceptions that have entered the secondary literature over the years, especially those that bear on the matter of authenticity.<sup>1</sup>

### *1. The Letter Represents the Mystical Gospel as the Liturgical Reading for Baptism*

The most fundamental misconception in the study of the mystical gospel is probably this—that the *Letter to Theodore* describes this gospel as the reading for Christian baptism. Cyril C. Richardson proposed this hypothesis to Morton Smith in January of 1961 (Smith, *Secret Gospel* 64–65). In Richardson’s opinion, the letter’s gospel story depicts Jesus baptizing the young man in the evening of the seventh day after Jesus raised him from the dead, and this story was read to believers undergoing baptism during the Paschal Vigil. Smith developed this proposal in his book *Clement of Alexandria and a Secret Gospel of Mark*.

The main problem with the baptism hypothesis has always been its neglect of exegesis. Richardson correctly noted that the letter specifies the life setting of the mystical gospel in the statement that it was “read only to those who are being initiated into the great mysteries” (II.1–2). In reference to these great mysteries, Richardson wrote, “I take this to mean baptism, to which Clement applies all degrees of mystery language” (qtd. in Smith, *Secret Gospel* 65). Smith accepted this conclusion without question, as have many others, including, most notably, Peter Jeffery, who based the first ninety pages of his book *The Secret Gospel of Mark Unveiled* on the assumption that the great mysteries refers to baptism and first Eucharist (2007, 17).

Richardson and Jeffery were both right to claim that Clement applied mystery religion imagery to baptism. But Clement applied mystery imagery to other aspects of Christianity as well, so the initiation imagery in the letter could refer to something else. The way to determine what initiation into the great mysteries

---

<sup>1</sup> This paper is a revised version of “Fifty Years of Befuddlement: Ten Enduring Misconceptions about the ‘Secret’ Gospel of Mark,” which I presented on 24 Nov. 2008 at the Synoptic Gospels section of the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature. My thanks go to Roy Kotansky and Charles Hedrick for their corrections and improvements.

means in a letter attributed to Clement is by studying the places in Clement's corpus where the exact phrase "the great mysteries" occurs and then considering whether those references fit with the usage in the letter. This is straightforward exegesis.

When you do this, you discover that Clement referred to initiation into the great mysteries three times, all in the *Stromateis* (I.28.176.1–2; IV.1.3.1; V.11.70.7–71.3; cf. I.1.15.3), and that in each case he was referring to the highest stage of Christian theological education, two stages beyond baptism. In Clement's scheme, which he adapted directly from Philo, the lowest level of initiation was a water purification, that is, baptism, which paralleled the preliminary water purifications of the Greek mysteries. This was followed by initiation into the lesser mysteries and finally initiation into the great mysteries. But here the literal analogy with the Greek mysteries breaks down, for by the lesser mysteries both Clement and Philo meant the study of ethics and science, which is to say, the study of God (as the Logos) indirectly through careful observation of his visible creations within the material cosmos. This intellectual and moral education was followed by philosophy, which was intended to lead the Christian to perceive the invisible and immaterial realities, which Platonists like Philo and Clement pictured as a noetic world that lay beyond the fixed sphere of the stars that encircled the material cosmos. The study of philosophy was the beginning of initiation into the great mysteries of this immaterial realm, which for Clement and Philo meant the study of God (as the Logos) more directly through mystical contemplation of the hidden senses of scripture. The ultimate goal of the great mysteries was a clear vision of God (as Christ, for Clement) perceived apart from his observable works and invisible powers (cf. Philo, *Abraham* 24.121–123), analogous to the climactic vision in the great mysteries of Eleusis, which was called *epopteia* (Wolfson 1962, 47–48, who is citing Philo, *Sacrifices* 15.59–60; *Alleg. Interp.* 3.33.100).

That the letter itself has this scheme in mind is clear from its statement that the correct interpretation of the mystical gospel's special materials "would, as a mystagogue, lead the hearers into the innermost sanctuary of the sevenfold veiled truth" (I.25–26). This imagery of entering a temple's innermost sanctuary occurs four times in Clement's undisputed writings (*Strom.* V.4.19.1–20.1; V.6; VI.8.68.1–3; *Excerpta ex Theodoto* 27), and in each case the sanctuary represents the noetic world, and entering this sanctuary represents the rare ability to perceive the purely intelligible realities contained therein. For Clement, this achievement marks the highest stage of advancement in virtue and understanding, comparable to attaining the status of high priest within the Christian community of "priests." In other words, the metaphors of initiation into the great

mysteries and of entering the holy of holies are different ways of describing the same unusual ability to perceive purely intellectual and more spiritual realities that exist beyond the material realm (Brown 2013).

So the *Letter to Theodore* was describing the highest level of Christian initiation available, and this initiation was not a literal rite of initiation like baptism but a figurative initiation into esoteric truths concealed beneath the literal level of scripture. Since the letter says that the mystical gospel was read *only* to those who were being initiated into the great mysteries, and in Clement's scheme (as with the literal progression of the Eleusinian mysteries) initiation into the great mysteries was conditional upon prior initiation into the lesser mysteries, which in turn were conditional upon baptism (the preliminary water purification), this text could not have been read to persons undergoing, or preparing to undergo, baptism and first Eucharist.

## 2. *The Mystical Gospel Excerpt Depicts Jesus Baptizing the Young Man*

If the letter does not describe the mystical gospel as the reading for baptism, then what does this gospel depict occurring between Jesus and the young man "after six days"? Most scholars, beginning with Richardson and Smith, have supposed that the following statement depicts a baptism: "and when it was evening the young man comes to him wearing a linen sheet over his naked body, and he remained with him that night; for Jesus was teaching him the mystery of the kingdom of God." The minority of scholars who have not imagined a baptism have nonetheless imagined some sort of cultic or magical ritual occurring here, or else a reference to gay sex. All of these interpretations are rather puzzling, though, since the text itself states that Jesus "was teaching" the young man the same "mystery of the kingdom of God" that Jesus had already taught "those who were about him with the twelve" in the parable chapter of Mark 4. The text of the mystical gospel makes reference neither to water, nor to magic, nor to the linen sheet coming off, nor to Jesus and the young man being naked, nor to the young man putting on a white robe after some unspecified ritual that is not said to have happened. The text simply states that Jesus taught him the mystery of the kingdom of God. In the context of the Gospel of Mark, this would appear to mean that Jesus taught him a mysterious truth about God's kingdom that he concealed from outsiders by his use of parabolic words and deeds (4:10–12).

What, however, would the mystery of the kingdom of God signify within the context of late second-century Alexandrian Christianity? For that, again, we must turn to Clement. When Clement discussed "the mystery of the kingdom of

the heavens” in the *Stromateis*, he equated this mystery with the great mysteries of theology (the secrets about God and his powers) and adduced that Jesus concealed these mysteries about God in parables (V.12.80.3–8). Noting, later on, that Jesus “spoke all things in parables, and without a parable he spoke nothing to them” (Mark 4:33–34//Matt 13:34) and that “all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made” (John 1:3), Clement reasoned that Jesus created all scripture and rendered everything therein in parables (*Strom.* VI.15.124.6–125.2). When, therefore, Jesus privately taught his disciples what he had concealed from others in parables, he was imparting a secret oral tradition consisting of the true explanations of the theological mysteries concealed figuratively or parabolically in the scriptures (cf. I.12.56.2–3; VI.15.126.2–3, 129.4–130.1). Clement would have supposed, therefore, that when the mystical Gospel of Mark depicts Jesus teaching the young man the mystery of the kingdom of God, it was depicting the first stage in the secret transmission of the great mysteries from Jesus to his disciples to the elders of the church. He would have supposed, in other words, that this text not only was written for the people who were studying the great mysteries of theology, but also depicts the way these mysteries were transmitted: privately, from teacher to student, through the exposition of theological truths concealed figuratively in scripture.

### 3. *The Mystical Gospel of Mark Was a Secret Gospel*

And this leads us to the third major misunderstanding that has hampered scholarship on this subject from the beginning. One of Clement’s favourite words for describing the way scripture conceals its mysteries in symbols and figures was *mystikos*, or mystic. As he put it in the first chapter of the *Stromateis*, “the mysteries are transmitted mystically” (I.1.13.4). Clement also referred to the allegorical truths hidden in scripture as “spiritual” (*Paedagogus* II.1.17.1). So when the *Letter to Theodore* describes the gospel that Mark produced in Alexandria as a *mystikon euangelion* and “a more spiritual gospel” (II.6, 12; I.21–22), it is describing a text whose essential teachings were concealed within its symbols and figures. In other words, it is telling us *how* this text was read to its restricted audience, specifically, that it was expounded allegorically as a means of transmitting the secret oral tradition of Alexandrian theology, the “hierophantic teaching of the Lord” that Mark was careful *not* to include in this text in an overt form (I.22–24; cf. “the things not to be uttered,” which alludes to the secrets disclosed during the great mysteries of Eleusis).

Unfortunately, this point about *how* the mystical gospel was expounded has been obscured by Smith's decision to translate *mystikon euangelion* as "secret gospel." This translation implies that the secrecy concerns the text itself rather than the hidden meanings of some of its unique contents. The letter actually tells us only that this text was "most carefully kept" within the Alexandrian church (not "guarded," as Smith translated τηρεῖται in II.1) in the sense that it was read and expounded only to the most advanced Christians. I think we can assume that the *existence* of this text was known, not only to the Carpocratians, who also discussed its contents with Theodore, but also to the less advanced members of the Alexandrian church. Contrary to popular belief, the implied author does not tell Theodore to deny *the existence* of this gospel with an oath. Rather, he advises that "when they [the Carpocratians] put forward their falsifications," Theodore should deny *to them* with an oath that "the mystical gospel is by Mark" (II.11–12).<sup>2</sup> That is, Theodore should deny the apostolic authorship, hence the authority, of the gospel upon which Carpocrates based his blasphemous theology, in order not to lend credence to their views. The Carpocratians were the ones who told Theodore about this gospel, so he can hardly persuade them that it does not exist. Now, one might plausibly infer that Clement and other elders were reluctant to mention this text outside the Alexandrian church due to the discreditable use made of it by the Carpocratians, but this prudence should not affect how we translate and interpret the meaning of *mystikon* or the synonymous term *pneumatikōteron*.

#### 4. *There Is Something Erotic about a Young Man Wearing Only a Linen Sheet*

In *On the Contemplative Life* Philo described a sect of Jews near Alexandria whose members spent their days in isolation in their own homes, in the sanctuary of a special room, being "initiated into the mysteries of the holy life" (τὰ τοῦ σεμνοῦ βίου μυστήρια τελοῦνται) by reading the Torah allegorically (21, 25, 28, 30, 78). Philo also told us (38) that in warm weather these women and men dressed only in a linen sheet (Taylor 2003, 287–302), which is the same unusual attire worn by the young man when he receives instruction in the mystery of the kingdom of God in his own home, in a text used to initiate Christians in the great mysteries through allegorical exegesis. In the first-century Alexandrian

---

<sup>2</sup> Alternatively: "that it [i.e., the adulterated Carpocratian version] is Mark's mystical gospel."



context of initiation into the great mysteries, the young man is appropriately dressed.

This detail has not seemed so apt to modern scholars, however, who often have difficulty picturing a simple linen sheet as sufficient attire. Over the years a few have pointed to this detail with raised eyebrows, and recently some have labelled it patently homoerotic (e.g. Landry 2009, 374). This inference has always surprised me, for the same combination of details about a young man wearing a linen sheet over his naked body, also at night and in the immediate company of Jesus while the other disciples are somewhere else, appears in chapter 14 of the canonical gospel, but very few people find anything sexually suggestive in Mark's description of this individual's attempt to continue following with Jesus when Jesus is arrested, even though in this instance the sheet actually comes off as the young man evades capture. In any event, there is a more plausible interpretation of the young man's attire in both incidents, and all one has to do to discover this interpretation is follow the mystical gospel's own directives to the meaning of the linen sheet.

The principal clue to the sheet's meaning is the one recurrence of this noun, *sindōn*, in the Gospel of Mark at 15:46, where Joseph of Arimathea similarly wraps Jesus' corpse in a linen sheet. A linen sheet wrapped around a naked body is the proper attire of the dead. A reader of the mystical text of Mark is in a better position to understand this connection, for the sheet that Joseph purchases for Jesus' burial is part of a long list of parallels that occur between the narrative about the young man in mystical Mark and the incidents of Jesus' burial and the discovery of his open tomb (15:46–16:8). In both places one finds the following:

- a linen sheet;
- a grouping of three women, the third of whom is Salome;
- a dead man buried in a rock-hewn tomb;
- a large stone that blocks the door of the tomb and is later rolled aside;
- a raising miracle involving both Jesus and an unnamed young man;
- and the verb "wearing" (περιβεβλημένος) introducing the young man's unusual attire.

These strong parallels imply two important things: first, that the young man whom Jesus raises inside a tomb is the same young man who announces Jesus' resurrection inside Jesus' tomb; second, that the linen sheet worn by the young man in the evening after six days is the burial attire that he was wearing when Jesus first encountered him. This is symbolism—the *raison d'être* of a mystical gospel. It suggests that the nocturnal instruction in the mystery of the kingdom

of God has something to do with death. This should not surprise us: every time Jesus offers private instruction inside a house in Mark's gospel, it relates to the preceding incident.

The precise relationship between the linen sheet and Jesus' teaching is conveyed using a distinctively Markan literary technique, often called intercalation. This is Mark's practice of sandwiching one story inside another story as a way of implying that the two stories are mutually interpretive. For instance, in Mark, the clearing of the temple is sandwiched between the account of Jesus' cursing a fig tree (11:12–14) and the account of Peter's subsequent discovery that this tree had withered to its roots (11:20–25); this juxtaposition implies that the temple did not bear fruit and accordingly will suffer the same fate as the fig tree. In the case of the mystical text of Mark, the story of the request of James and John for positions of power when Jesus enters his glory (Mark 10:35–45) is sandwiched between the story of Jesus' raising and instruction of the young man and the resumption of this story in his refusal to welcome the young man's sister, his mother, and Salome in Jericho. This juxtaposition allows Jesus' counterquestion to James and John, "Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" to fully explicate the symbolism of the linen sheet. The sheet signifies not just death, but more specifically, sharing in Jesus' passion. This is part of the Markan theme that anyone who comes after Jesus must take up his cross and follow him (8:34–35). When we understand that the linen sheet mystically signifies literal participation in Jesus' figurative baptism, we understand the enigma of why, when Jesus is arrested in Gethsemane, a young man dressed only in a linen sheet attempts to "follow with" Jesus as Jesus is being led away (14:51–52). He is announcing his resolve to undergo Jesus' "baptism," just as Jesus, shortly before, resolved to accept his "cup" (v. 36). Viewed in this light, the young man's subsequent panic and naked flight represents a failure in discipleship.

I stress again that this interpretation of the linen sheet is exegetical. As I demonstrated in *Mark's Other Gospel*, the mystical text of Mark uses several of Mark's literary techniques, and the purpose of those techniques is to guide a reader's interpretation. Any interpreter who ignores the guidance offered by those techniques is choosing the path of subjective preference and cannot honestly claim to be seeking the author's intention.

5. *There is Something Homoerotic*  
*about Jesus and the Young Man Spending the Night Together*

The four misconceptions that I have discussed so far can each be traced as far back as the early 1960s, originating in the studies of Morton Smith, Cyril C. Richardson, and Pierson Parker, the latter being the first to describe the young man's attire as "patient of a perverted interpretation" (Parker 1974, 54). I turn now to some more recent misconceptions that have emerged within scholarship that attempts to prove that the letter is a modern forgery.

The first is really an extension of the previous argument. Every now and again a scholar will paraphrase the mystical gospel's statement "and he [the young man] remained with him [Jesus] that night" using the modern sexual euphemism "spent the night with." We find an early instance of this paraphrase in Parker's 1973 review of Smith's books on "secret" Mark: "After six days the lad came, clad only in a white [*sic*] robe [*sic*], and spent the night with Jesus" (5). Eighteen years later the Jesus Seminar opted for something similar in its Scholars Version translation. In keeping with Daryl D. Schmidt's use of colloquial and idiomatic English to convey the simple, spoken character of canonical Mark's Greek, Helmut Koester and Stephen J. Patterson rendered this phrase, "He spent that night with him, because Jesus taught him the mystery of God's domain." Although the actual euphemism requires "*the* night" instead of "that night," some authors who consulted the Jesus Seminar's translation had no problem making that transition and even appealed to this euphemism as evidence that the text is modern. Donald Akenson, for instance, offered the paraphrase, "Having, after nightfall, baptized the rich and enthusiastic young man, Jesus 'spent the night with him, because'—and here the joke goes over the top—'because Jesus taught him the mystery of God's domain' (Secret Mark 1:12). What we have here is a nice ironic gay joke at the expense of all of the self-important scholars who not only miss the irony, but believe that this alleged piece of gospel comes to us in the first-known letter of the great Clement of Alexandria" (Akenson 2002, 88). Here Akenson actually quoted "spent the night with him" as if "the night" were part of the Jesus Seminar's translation. Similarly, Stephen C. Carlson pointed to "recent translations" (his endnote cited only the Jesus Seminar's) that use "and he spent that night with him" as being "more natural" and therefore preferable to Smith's "wooden translation." By the end of the same page, the relative smoothness of the Jesus Seminar's paraphrase and its similarity to the modern euphemism have become the basis for the conclusion, "To a twentieth-century scholar, the main *Secret Mark* passage culminates with a euphemistic suggestion of a casual sexual encounter between the young man

and Jesus” (Carlson 2005, 67, 125 n. 6). Other examples of this euphemistic paraphrase can readily be found (e.g., Ehrman 2003, 87; Perkins 2007, 160, 161; Köstenberger, Kellum, and Quarles 2009, 133; Landry 2009, 374).

We need to consider, then, whether the possible connotations of the verb *to spend* fit the context and whether the syntax of the sentence permits it. According to Merriam-Webster, *to spend* in this sense means “to cause or permit to elapse: PASS <*spend* the night>.” It comes from Old English *āspendan*, which means “to spend, expend, distribute, squander, consume” (Hall 2004, 26). Expressions like “spent the day” or “spent the night” sometimes carry the connotation of passing time leisurely or, when the duration is emphasized, less productively than one would have liked (e.g., “I spent the whole afternoon looking for my keys”). The euphemistic sexual connotation of “spent the night with” is not automatically implied by this phrase. To some extent it relies on the association between nighttime and sex. Taken literally, the expression “she spent the night with him” implies that these two people passed that time together leisurely, and the fact that it occurred at night raises the possibility that they had sex. But it is *the lack of further explanation* that politely suggests that they in fact had sex, thus making this descriptive statement a euphemism (an inoffensive substitute for what you actually mean). There is a difference between “she spent the night with him” (wink) and “she spent the night with him watching old movies.” This point is important, for the explanatory *gar* clause and the imperfect tense of *didaskō* in mystical Mark explain why Jesus and the young man were together during the entire night and also imply that this time was productive: The young man stayed with Jesus because Jesus was teaching him the mystery of the kingdom of God—the mystery that separates “those outside” from those who actually repent and are saved (Mark 4:10–12). People who read the first clause as a euphemism seem not to notice the second clause or else wish it to be another euphemism, which it isn’t.

Syntactical considerations are more decisive. The Greek reads as follows: καὶ ἔμεινε σὺν αὐτῷ τὴν νύκτα ἐκείνην· ἐδίδασκε γὰρ αὐτὸν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὸ μυστήριον τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ. The main issue here is whether the verb *menō* is transitive or intransitive. Smith’s translation “remained with him that night” presumes that we are dealing with an intransitive verb (“to remain”) with its usual meaning, a prepositional phrase (“with him”), and an accusative of extent (“that night”). Conversely, the Jesus Seminar’s “spent that night with him” presupposes a transitive verb (“to spend”) with a meaning that *menō* never conveys, a direct object (“that night”), and a prepositional phrase (“with him”). We can determine the correct usage by inserting the possible transitive and intransitive meanings into the sentence and considering the translations that result.

As an intransitive verb, *menō* can mean *remain*, *stay*, *continue*, *persist*. As a transitive verb, however, it means *wait for*, *await*. So there is no sense in which “spent that night” is a possible literal translation, and no viable transitive meaning. A transitive rendering such as “And he awaited (the arrival of) that night with him, because Jesus was teaching him the mystery of the kingdom of God” is both outside the realm of possibility and an implausible explanation for why the two of them would be *awaiting* the setting of the sun together. The reference to teaching does, however, cogently explain why the young man *remained* with Jesus *for the whole night*, that is, when this man would normally be sleeping in his own room.

The text itself supports intransitive translations such as “remained with him that night” and “stayed with him that night,” but not the loose paraphrase “spent that night with him” and the sexual implications that some people have drawn from it (see also Hedrick 2013, 33).

#### 6. *The Letter Contains Anachronistic Allusions to Oscar Wilde’s Play Salomé*

A recent variant on the document’s supposed homoeroticism is the contention in Jeffery’s book that the letter and its gospel excerpts together allude to Oscar Wilde’s 1891 play *Salomé*, specifically to the stage direction “Salomé dances the dance of the seven veils,” and do so in an anti-heterosexual manner (2007, 226–234). Jeffery’s attempt to demonstrate this anachronistic allusion combines five items of information. First, the letter refers to a “sevenfold veiled truth.” Second, the shorter of the letter’s two gospel excerpts refers to Salome. Third, Salome is presented as a seductress in the “secret” gospel (2007, 198), just as the character Salome is a seductress in Wilde’s play. Fourth, the story about the dance of Salome that inspired the dance of the seven veils in Wilde’s play appears in chapter 6 of the Gospel of Mark. And fifth, the letter refers to “the Wisdom of God, through Solomon” (II.13). The name Solomon is the masculine counterpart of Salome, and Salome, according to Morton Smith, “appears as the equivalent of the OT ‘Wisdom’” in the *Manichaean Psalm Book* (2007, 229). Ergo, Jeffery concluded, the truth hidden behind seven veils is none other than Salome of Wilde’s play, who signifies the immorality of heterosexuality:

And what is inside this innermost sanctuary, hidden by the seven veils? A selfish, vengeful teenager who could have possessed the veil of the Holy of Holies, but chose necrophilia. A bloodthirsty temptress, even more terrifying

than Walter Pater's vampire Mona Lisa. ...To find our way into the innermost sanctuary, past the seven veils, is to find conventional heterosexual morality turned inside out: a sanctimonious Christian [i.e., the implied author of the letter] condemns the carnality of the Carpocratians, invoking an ideal of male-female attraction that, once unveiled, turns out to be nothing but violence and revolting depravity (2007, 230).

The allusion to Oscar Wilde that Jeffery detected is not rooted in exegesis but in his habit of associative reasoning. This will become evident as we begin to examine the five supports. First, the connection Jeffery drew between the letter's reference to "the innermost sanctuary of that truth hidden by seven veils" and the character Salome in the letter's gospel excerpt is disproved rather than confirmed by exegesis. The letter does link this metaphorical sanctuary with *some* of the contents of the mystical gospel in the following statement:

To the stories already written [Mark] added yet others and, moreover, brought in certain sayings of which he knew the interpretation would, as a mystagogue, lead the hearers into the innermost sanctuary of that truth hidden by seven veils. (I.24–26; Smith's translation)

But the letter makes an important distinction here. Mark, we are told, added both *praxeis*—the term Smith translated as "stories"—and *logia*—the term Smith translated as "sayings." The *praxeis* are described as "yet others," implying that they were of the same character as the ones that appear in the canonical gospel. It is the *logia* that have the special ability of leading hearers into the metaphorical veiled sanctuary. Now the brief incident set in Jericho in which Jesus refuses to receive the young man's mother, his sister, and Salome consists entirely of narration and would not therefore qualify as one of the *logia*, especially if we accept Smith's inference that the *logia* refer to "sayings of Jesus" (*Clement* 39, 40). Interestingly, no sayings at all appear in the gospel material quoted in the letter. Even the direct discourse is confined to the sister's petition, "Son of David, have mercy on me." So whatever the *logia* are that lead readers into the innermost sanctuary of the truth, they would not include the *praxis* in Jericho that mentions Salome.<sup>3</sup> So the letter itself implicitly dissociates the mystical gospel's reference to Salome from the sevenfold veiled sanctuary.

<sup>3</sup> When Jeffery argued this point, he concealed the problem by twice replacing the word *logia* with "more spiritual gospel" (2007, 228–229, 230). I myself would include the story of the raising and instruction of the young man among the *logia* on the basis that Clement and other second-century fathers did not actually use *logia* to distinguish between narrative and sayings. I do not think, however, that the term *logia* could be pressed

Jeffery's notion that the mystical gospel presents Salome as a seductress also has no basis in the document, because nothing at all is said of how she behaved. The passage reads: "(And he comes to Jericho.) And there were there the sister of the young man whom Jesus loved and his mother and Salome, and Jesus did not receive them." The information that Jesus did not even meet with the women moreover affords Salome no opportunity to act seductively in his presence. Jeffery creates the impression that Salome "wants" Jesus and that Jesus is aware of this by discussing how Smith described her role in two different non-canonical texts (2007, 97–98, 121, 237). But this information is irrelevant to the meaning of the text at hand. Jeffery has read into the text ideas that are essential to his argument.<sup>4</sup>

What about the point that Salome's dance occurs in Mark 6? Mark's story about the death of John the Baptist relates that "Herodias' daughter" danced for King Herod and that Herod was so impressed that he offered her whatever reward she desired (v. 22). This indeed is the basis for the character of Salome in Wilde's play. But what does this story have to do with the disciple Salome? Although tradition ascribes the name Salome to the character who dances for Herod, she is unnamed in Mark's story, and Mark's reference to her as a "little girl" (τῷ κορασίῳ) clearly distinguishes her from the disciple Salome in mystical Mark, who is later described as one of the women (γυναικες) watching the crucifixion from a distance (Mark 15:40). Jeffery was compelled to state that "the Secret Evangelist has intentionally conflated" the disciple Salome and the unnamed little girl (2007, 226). But the person who conflated these characters was Jeffery, not the author of mystical Mark, who presumably would have known that a character cannot be simultaneously a little girl and a grown woman.

So there is no exegetical basis for Jeffery's claim that this text alludes anachronistically to Wilde's play *Salomé*. All we have is Jeffery's inclination to think of Oscar Wilde when he reads the words "Salome" and "sevenfold veiled" in the same text. This veiling, however, is "temple imagery rather than clothing imagery, and involves no human" (Brown 2013, 268 n. 52). The letter is devel-

---

to include a narrative, such as the (non)encounter in Jericho, that completely lacks dialogue (Brown 2005, 125–127). The important issue here, though, is what *Smith* understood this term to mean, since Jeffery supposed that Smith was the text's author, and Smith's understanding of Salome's seductive character is vital to Jeffery's argument that the document alludes to Wilde's play.

<sup>4</sup> Jeffery also supposed that Jesus' refusal to meet with the three women in Jericho was patterned after his response to the grieving sister's petition, "Son of David, have mercy on me," which Jeffery reads as the angry revulsion of a gay man to the sexual advance of a woman who is in the throes of an orgasm (2007, 92–93). On this subject, see my review of Jeffery's book (Brown 2007, 24–30).

oping the same imagery in *Strom.* VI.8.68.1–3, which presents Christ metaphorically unveiling the holy of holies (the noetic world) and a series of sanctuaries beyond that (the more spiritual realms) through his allegorical explanations of the scriptures to his closest disciples. This is the language of early Jewish and Christian mysticism, which envisioned the approach to God in terms of an ascent through a series of seven palaces or heavens culminating in a vision of God's glory on his chariot throne. The *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, for instance, envisions the heavens in terms of seven palaces and speaks of the "seven mysteries of knowledge in the wonderful mystery of the seven regions of the hol[y of holies]" (4Q 403 1 II, 27; García Martínez 1996).

### 7. *The Letter to Theodore Is Too Clementine to Be by Clement*

It is now a common refrain that the letter of Clement is "more like Clement than Clement ever is," as if a forger picked up on Clement's characteristic words and phrases and used them with greater frequency than Clement did. That is how Bart Ehrman has characterized the evidence (2003, 85–86). David Landry similarly stated, "The letter uses an exceptionally high number of Clement's favorite words, as if the author may have been using a modern tool such as a concordance to help him imitate Clement's style" (2009, 374). Carlson was more extreme, referring to "a hyper-Clementine style" in the letter and to its "excessively Clementine nature" (2005, 52, 53). Even more striking, Jeffery characterized the letter as a "collage" (2007, 181) and a "cento" (2007, 91, 99, 183). Behind these descriptions lies the 1995 statistical study by Andrew H. Criddle in which he examined the letter's ratio of words never before used by Clement to words used only once before and concluded that the letter contained too few new words. From this finding Criddle went on to *postulate* a hypothetical scenario that could account for it. Basically, he imagined that a forger

in imitating the style of Clement, sought to use words found in Clement but not in other Patristic writers and to avoid words not found in Clement but present in other Patristic writers. In doing so the writer brought together more rare words and phrases scattered throughout the authentic works of Clement than are compatible with genuine Clementine authorship (1995, 218).

It is this *hypothesis* about what a forger might have done that has formed the basis for claims that the letter is too much like Clement—not Criddle's data



itself. When you recall that Criddle's statistical analysis examined no phrases and focused exclusively on Clement's least favourite words—the ones Clement never used before and the ones he previously used only once—you realize that such a study could not demonstrate that the letter uses Clement's favourite words or phrases too often or has a hyper-Clementine style or is constructed out of phrases from Clement's other writings. Such inferences rest on air.

The most serious problem with these characterizations of Criddle's findings has to do with the methodology itself. Years before Criddle published his study, Ronald Thisted and Bradley Efron tested the validity of this statistical model on Shakespeare's writings and showed it to be unreliable in determining authorship when only the categories of words previously never used and words previously used once are considered. Indeed, the method Criddle used was less reliable than a coin toss, having correctly identified the writer of only three out of seven poems tested, a success rate of 43 percent (1987, 445–455). Allan Pantuck pointed this out to me, and further noted that if Criddle's method were to be applied to the data presented by Thisted and Efron, it would exclude at least two of the four undisputed poems of Shakespeare that were used as controls. Thisted and Efron concluded that in the case of previously unknown works of an author "there is no consistent trend toward an excess or deficiency of new words" (1987, 451).

### *8. Clement Would Not Have Quoted the Mystical Gospel to Theodore*

The next influential misconception about the letter comes to us from Carlson. He pointed out, quite correctly, that Clement would not have needed to quote from the mystical gospel in order to answer Theodore's questions about it. Clement could simply have assured him that this gospel did not contain any of the troubling phrases such as "naked man with naked man" that Theodore had asked him about. Hence, Carlson reasoned, the presence of these quotations is suspicious and better attributed to a forger's agenda of using the letter as a vehicle for presenting the gospel excerpts (2005, 57–58).

This reasoning is logical, but the question of whether Clement would have quoted the pericope in the letter is not one to be answered by logic. It is a question about an individual's characteristic behaviour, and can be answered only by looking at what Clement did in similar situations. In several places in *Stromateis* III, Clement likewise confronted heretical misappropriations of scripture, and his *modus operandi* in dealing with these distortions was to quote the passage that was being used as a proof text and then give his own exegesis that shows what the text means within its larger literary context. His procedure is apparent

in *Strom.* III.6.45.1–3, where he addressed how certain heretics used the Gospel of the Egyptians to justify their anti-worldliness and rejection of procreation. The proper response to them, he asserted, was first to show that these heresies were predicted in 1 John 2:18–19 and second to “[over]turn their [heretical] statements on the grounds that they destroy the sense of their citations” (Ferguson 1991 trans.). He then proceeded to quote the misused passage in the Gospel of the Egyptians and to offer its true interpretation. When he returned to the matter, he also discussed elements in the larger context that confute the heretical interpretation but are conveniently ignored by the heretics (*Strom.* III.9.66.1–3). We even find him on one occasion quoting Mal 3:15 twice and noting that the words “the shameless god” that factor into a heretical interpretation are not present in the text itself (III.4.38.2–5).

Viewed against the background of what Clement actually did in such circumstances, the approach taken in the *Letter to Theodore* is precisely what we would expect Clement to do. The writer of this letter began by claiming that the Carpocratians are “the wandering stars” predicted in Jude 13 (I.2–7) then quoted the disputed passages from the mystical text, affirmed that the Carpocratian interpolations are not present, and then offered “the true explanation and that which accords with the true philosophy,” which, unfortunately, is where our copy of the letter breaks off. The fact that the letter specifies where the two quotations are situated within the Gospel of Mark likewise accords with Clement’s procedure, since that information would be necessary in order to interpret them in context (see Brown 2008).

### 9. Scholars Have Discovered Clues That Smith Left to His Hoax

Carlson also popularized the notion that Smith left deliberate clues to his hoax. Carlson identified one alleged clue in a photograph of a different manuscript from Mar Saba (MS 22) that Smith included in his book *The Secret Gospel*. According to Carlson, the handwriting at the top right of the photographed page is identical to the eighteenth-century hand of the *Letter to Theodore* (MS 65), yet Smith, in the catalogue he made of manuscripts in the tower library, dubiously assigned it to a twentieth-century individual named M. Madiotes, a pseudonym whose first initial stands for Morton and whose last name means Baldy or Swindler, in reference to Smith’s baldness (Carlson 2005, 42–44, 47, 79). Carlson also argued that the letter’s expression “even the salt loses its savor” cleverly alludes to Smith’s given name by anachronistically presupposing the adulteration of salt by the addition of a substance that spoils its flavour, a cir-

cumstance that was not possible until the Morton Salt company in America found a way to make salt free-flowing through the addition of an anti-caking agent and also added “harsh-tasting potassium iodide” to fight iodine deficiency disorders (Carlson 2005, 60–63). Subsequently, Francis Watson reasoned that the word μωρανθῆναι (“to become insipid”) in the same phrase contains the name Morton (provided you ignore the letters that do not fit) and the word παραχαράσσεται (“falsified”) earlier in the same sentence points to the English word *smith*, given this chain of thought:

1. The Greek verb παραχαράσσεται “focuses on the act of imprinting a false image.”
2. The equivalent word in English is “forge.”
3. That English equivalent “derives from the French *forger*” (itself from the Latin *fabricare*).
4. “The counterfeit product ‘forged’ by the ‘forger’ is as likely to be literary as monetary.”
5. In English, the person who forges in metal is called a *smith*.
6. A person named Smith might know these facts about how the noun *smith* could be traced to the verb παραχαράσσω. (2010, 152–154)

Pantuck has referred to such arguments as Six Degrees of Morton Smith, alluding to the notion that everyone in the world is related to everyone else by no more than six degrees of separation. By analogy, if one allows oneself enough steps between Smith and this text, one can find some line of reasoning that will connect it to him. This way of searching for potential clues has some resemblance to detective work, but unlike a police investigation, where the detective starts with an objective crime scene, sifts it methodically for objective clues, then follows those clues to potential suspects, the game of Six Degrees works in reverse: one starts with a suspect, sifts the evidence for conceivable traces of that suspect, then molds those conceivable traces into subjective clues that point to the existence of a crime scene. Why else would Watson take note of the verb παραχαράσσεται then spend a page discussing how one could move from that Greek verb (through English, French, Latin, and back to English) to the words *forger* and *smith*? Notice, for instance, that the alleged forgery is literary, but the etymology connecting it to Smith envisions a person who forges in metal. Similarly, Watson’s question “does μωρ[αν]θῆν[αι] suggest ‘Morton’?” (2010, 154) would not have occurred to him unless he had been reasoning from suspect to clue. As Edward R. Smith wrote, “Watson can make this connection to Smith only by arbitrarily ignoring the four letters that are not part of the name Morton

(*alpha, nu, alpha, iota*) and by changing the *th* sound of *theta* to simple *t* (and the *ā* sound of *eta* to the *ə* sound in *mōr-tʰn*)” (2011, 264). Since this approach could connect Mar Saba 65 to any number of persons, I submit that it does not so much detect clues as invent them.

Carlson initially had better success with his M. Madiotes and Morton Salt arguments, but those arguments had a fundamental problem: every step he took to link the manuscript to Smith was untenable or simply mistaken. As Pantuck and I have shown elsewhere through an examination of the original, uncropped photograph of Mar Saba 22, the top handwriting is not the same hand that appears in Mar Saba 65; the hand on this page that Smith identified as belonging to a twentieth-century individual is actually just a signature in different handwriting that appears underneath and upside down relative to the top handwriting; Smith did not read that name as *Madiotes* but as *Madeotas* (the person who translated Smith’s English article into Greek changed what Smith wrote here, evidently supposing Smith’s transcription to be a mistake); and the name that appears on the page might actually be *Modestos* (the ink is so faded that we cannot be sure of most of the letters; Pantuck and Brown 2008; Brown 2006, 293–298).

Carlson’s Morton Salt argument has similar problems that are too numerous and involved to summarize here (see Brown 2006, 306–313). The fact that every step in Carlson’s deliberate-clue arguments proved to be untenable, yet the mistakes always got him to Morton Smith, shows how dubious the game of Six Degrees really is.

### 10. *An Ink Test Is Still Needed to Rule Out Modern Forgery*

Quentin Quesnell first advocated the need for a forensic examination of the manuscript in an article published in 1975. His main point was that the evidence that Smith had provided for his discovery was insufficient: matters of authenticity are best decided through physical examination of the manuscript or artifact itself. On this point Quesnell cited Edgar Goodspeed exactly so:

It is the practice of scholars when any new discovery in ancient literature is brought to their attention to inquire as to the form in which it was found....What the scholar really desires is to see the very document itself.... He naturally wishes to scrutinize its material, whether papyrus, parchment, or paper; to examine the writing with an eye to determining its date; and in general to interrogate the discovery on a whole series of particulars bearing

upon the all-important question of its genuineness... (1975, 48–49, quoting Goodspeed 1931, 3–4)

Quesnell reasoned that only close scrutiny of the physical manuscript could disclose signs of forgery: “One should make a microscopic examination of the writing to see whether it is indeed the free-flowing rapid scrawl of someone using his native script, or whether perhaps traces of careful copying, the subliminal tremors and tentative scratches of the forger, can be detected” (1975, 52).

For decades scholars have repeated this opinion that the issue of authenticity cannot be settled without a microscopic examination of the physical manuscript, so it is worth noting that Quesnell overstated his point. Goodspeed himself had believed that issues of authenticity could usually be settled through a study of photographs. Where Goodspeed wrote, “What the scholar really desires is to see the very document itself,” the ellipsis in Quesnell’s quotation omits the qualification, “but failing that a photograph of it will usually answer the purposes of his investigation” (noted in Hedrick and Olympiou 2000, 6). As Goodspeed went on to explain, “if the original cannot be shown, and a photograph of it is out of the question, the irreducible minimum upon which scholarship insists is exact information as to its whereabouts—the library, convent, or archive in which it lies, and the number, date, and other contents of the book that contains it. This is no caprice of learning, but a lesson learned by bitter experience of the overweening yearning of some people to be credited with discoveries that as a matter of fact were never made” (1931, 4–5). In other words, the documentation that Goodspeed had deemed normally sufficient to determine a discovery’s genuineness was no different from the documentation that Smith had provided, which included three sets of clear black-and-white photographs and the precise location and cataloguing information for the manuscript. It was Quesnell’s editing of Goodspeed’s words that made it appear that photographs alone cannot, at least at times, answer researchers’ questions pertaining to genuineness and that Smith had not lived up to the expectations of his profession.

Quesnell’s description of forensic handwriting analysis as “a microscopic examination of the writing to see whether it is indeed the free-flowing rapid scrawl of someone using his native script” reinforced his contention that only the physical document will do, but this description is also misleading, for it distorts the actual practice of questioned document examiners (QDEs) and the character of suspicious handwriting. There may indeed be times when a QDE

will need a microscope to study some aspect of a physical document,<sup>5</sup> but when magnification is needed in the course of determining whether the handwriting in a questioned document is natural or imitated, examiners normally rely on photographs. A good photograph of a page of writing will capture a surprising amount of detail about every pen stroke, which becomes visible when the original photograph is enlarged.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, the main features that examiners rely on to distinguish a natural hand from an imitation are obvious enough to require little if any enlargement to evaluate. One of the biggest misconceptions that scholars have inferred from Quesnell and Carlson is that forged writing and spontaneous writing could well appear indistinguishable except through the discovery of minute quirks such as “subliminal tremors” and “tentative scratches.” In actuality, *natural and imitated handwriting are quite different in their overall appearance*, at least to the trained eye of a QDE.

The overt differences that exist between natural and imitated handwriting result from differences in speed and attention. Natural handwriting is relatively fast and smooth, like the tire tracks of a fast moving bicycle. Imitated handwriting, by contrast, is slow and unsteady, more like the wobbly motion and abrupt corrections of a person learning to ride a bicycle (Koppenhaver 2002, 134). Natural handwriting is faster because it is produced unconsciously through habituated movements of the hand, whereas imitated writing is produced consciously by drawing individual letters as these appear in an exemplar. *Drawn writing therefore lacks smoothness throughout*. It resembles the conspicuously poor line quality—or tremor—that can result from age, weakness, or inexperience (illiteracy). Document examiners make this comparison themselves (Puri 1974; Hilton 1977; Conway 1959, 153; see Joseph 2000 for annotated bibliography), and they note that the tremor of fraud can be differentiated from the tremor of age or weakness by its hesitating and uncertain character. Whereas the tremor of age reflects “erratic writing impulses” such as short and abrupt jerks from side to side (Hilton 1977, 169), the tremor of forgery results from a combination of nervousness, slow and uncertain drawing movements, and abrupt course corrections when the forger realizes that his pen stroke is diverging from the form in his exemplar (Harrison 1958, 400–401; Osborn 1929, 110). Far from being “microscopic” and “subliminal,” the tremor of fraud is as conspicuous as these other tremors and therefore requires no enlargement to detect (Osborn

<sup>5</sup> E.g., ink analysis, detection of pencil erasures, determination of the original wording when a section of writing has been written over or crossed out, and determination of the relative order of overlapping strokes where alteration is suspected.

<sup>6</sup> The same does not apply to halftone reproductions like the ones that Carlson relied on, which actually lose information when they are enlarged to the point that the individual dots become visible and the illusion of grey-scale disappears.

1929, 110). On this matter, readers of Carlson's *The Gospel Hoax* have been badly misinformed. Not only did Carlson mistake an optical illusion for a tremor, due to his reliance on halftone reproductions of Smith's photographs (see Viklund and Paananen 2013), but his own inability to find it in more than 9 percent of the letters he looked at (29 supposed tremors for 328 characters over six lines of text) itself implies that Mar Saba 65 was written smoothly and at a normal speed, as the professional Greek QDE Venetia Anastasopoulou (2009) concluded in her own study based on scans made directly from the original colour photographs owned by Charles W. Hedrick and two sets of Smith's original black-and-white photographs.

In addition to a lack of smoothness, forged writing is deficient in other broad features that characterize normal writing and serve as indicators of authenticity. Imitated (drawn) writing is deficient, for instance, in internal consistency, because forgers occasionally lapse into their regular script due to mental fatigue, especially when the writing is extensive (Koppenhaver 2007, 129–130). It lacks the normal natural variation in the appearance of letters and words, because forgers work with a limited number of exemplars and try to imitate them exactly. Forged writing also lacks the normal variations in pen pressure between up and down strokes (although what is normal depends on the writer and the writing instrument) (Hilton 1977, 170; Koppenhaver 2007, 117). More importantly, forged writing lacks rhythm, a feature confined to skilful handwriting that is produced unconsciously by habituated hand movements; and it lacks artistic quality, including proportion and balance, which require broadly focused attention to the overall appearance of the writing in contrast to the forger's narrow attention to the individual pen strokes as they are being made (Brown 2011, 7–9).

Due to these deficiencies produced by lower speed and heightened concentration on the writing process, a page of imitated handwriting rarely looks free, fluent, and attractive, and it almost never displays good rhythm. As Wilson R. Harrison noted, “a fluent, rhythmic script of good line quality is extremely unlikely to have been either forged or disguised” (1958, 339; cf. Osborn 1929, 98–100). As it happens, this is precisely the kind of handwriting we have in the manuscript of the *Letter to Theodore*, according to Anastasopoulou's analysis. Not only does it display all of the signs of natural handwriting that QDEs look for, but it also contains none of the potential signs of forgery that Carlson purported to disclose in his own untrained analysis.

It is thus the broad and overt features of the handwriting, which are perfectly apparent in photos, that tell us whether there are grounds to suspect that the handwriting has been imitated. In contrast to Carlson's approach, which ignored

these features altogether, trained QDEs usually begin as Anastasopoulou did, by assessing and describing the overall qualities of the questioned writing. Then they look at the writing up close. Albert S. Osborn, for instance, listed thirty-seven “general features” that he considered before moving on to twenty more “special features” (1929, 288–291). If their assessment of the overall character of the writing leads them to suspect that the writing was unnatural, their up-close study might help them form an explanation for this fact by revealing such things as hesitations, patching, erasures, and artificial joining of letters. If such features are found, the examiner would then interpret them in relation to known authentic samples by the writer in question, because, as Carlson did not tell us, any of the potential signs of forgery may exist in an individual’s normal handwriting (Koppenhaver 2007, 92–93). A comparison like this was not possible in the case of the writer of Mar Saba 65, who remains unknown, but it was also unnecessary because, in Anastasopoulou’s view, “The Secret Mark letter, as written in detail in my analysis report, is written in a natural and spontaneous way and in my opinion, does not have such indications so [as] to make us think of a suspicious writing” (2010).

Had Anastasopoulou come to the opposite conclusion, there would be a legitimate reason to want to test the age of the ink, given our lack of genuine samples against which to interpret the (nonexistent) potential signs of forgery. Since, however, she concluded that the writing is natural and that no grounds exist for suspicion, the forensic analysis is complete. To remain skeptical is to adopt the extremely unlikely position that this complex eighteenth-century hand was forged in the twentieth century by someone capable of doing it automatically.

### *11. It Is Not That Hard to Forge a Complete Document*

To underscore the point that Mar Saba 65 is very unlikely to be a forgery, let us consider Osborn’s observations on the problems posed by the task of forging a whole document in writing that is not one’s own and apply them to Mar Saba 65. He began by noting the effects of anxiety:

Realization of the fact that forgery is a criminal act, the fear of discovery, and the painful anxiety to do the work well, all combine to bring about a mental and muscular condition in the writer that make[s] it very difficult, if not altogether impossible, to do the work in a skilful manner. An actual



criminal forgery undoubtedly is a poorer piece of work than could be executed by the same writer merely as an exhibition of skill.

This intense fixing of the attention on the matter and the process of writing makes it extremely difficult to write even one's own hand in a free and natural manner, and under these self-conscious conditions to be required to imitate successfully the writing of another is a task of very great difficulty (1929, 273).

Picture a scholar who knows that he is committing an act that could discredit him and ruin his career trying to write a three-page Greek manuscript with an unforgiving dip pen into pages fixed in the back of a 1646 book. If this hypothetical forger did a less than adequate job or made even one decisive error, he would have to obtain another copy of this rare book and start over. That is a lot of pressure to do well.

Osborn next discussed the problems involved in imitating writing forms. "To forge a writing with entire success one must first be able to see the significant characteristics of the writing of another and then must have the muscular skill necessary to reproduce them and at the same time eliminate all the characteristics of his own writing. The result usually shows failure in both phases of the performance." The task is even more problematic when the required pen movements are unfamiliar: "It is very much more difficult to simulate an unfamiliar movement than an unfamiliar form, and to copy unfamiliar forms and at the same time write freely in an unusual manner is simply impossible" (1929, 274). Mar Saba 65 contains dozens of foreign letterforms, ligatures, and habits of letter connection, all of which would need to be analyzed in their elements and reproduced freely without the forger's innate writing movements taking over.

Osborn later discussed a problem that few forgers ever think to consider: the need to make the writing seem natural by faking the indications of genuine writing:

An imitation to be successful must not only exemplify the ordinary and usual letter forms of the one whose writing is imitated, but it must also show the natural variation in design, proportions, size and spacing that any considerable quantity of genuine writing always shows, a result which it is much more difficult to produce successfully. ...and, what is the most difficult of all to attain, [it] must in its various parts show that careless abandon, disregard of details and inattention to the writing process that is always one of the most forceful indications of genuineness (1929, 293–294).

These features are so hard to fake precisely because they result from quickness and inattention. Mar Saba 65 contains these features, along with an elegant character, stable (or wavy) baselines, and high-level rhythm. The latter is a feature of skilful handwriting that document examiners agree is next to impossible to fake (Brown 2011, 7–9).

It should be evident, then, that “the successful forgery of a whole document is a task of extraordinary difficulty and requires intelligent attention to many particulars and details that do not enter into the task of fabricating only a signature” (Osborn 1929, 293). How many people are up to this task? Although Osborn was envisioning forgers working in their native language with a familiar writing instrument, he estimated there could be “the rare one or two, out of hundreds or thousands, who might do this act well” (1929, 272). And was Smith one of them? In this case the question is easy to answer because the experts agree that people cannot forge writing that is better than their own. Based on samples of his normal Greek handwriting taken throughout Smith’s life, Anastasopoulou concluded that this task would have been impossible for him. He wrote mostly disconnected Greek at a level “like that of young school children who have not started to use writing in a practical way expressing thoughts and ideas” (2009, 37).

### *12. Smith Could Have Used a Secret Accomplice*

Apart from dismissing Anastasopoulou’s judgments or rejecting the value of forensic handwriting analysis, the preferred alternative to accepting the conclusion that the writing of Mar Saba 65 is natural has been to imagine that Smith used a forger as an accomplice. The notion might not seem like a stretch to anyone who watches Hollywood dramas, where if someone needs a fake document in a hurry there is always a guy who knows a guy who can do a good job given enough time, or a passable job in a few hours. In Hollywood these professional forgers are just part of the criminal underworld in any city, as close as the nearest seedy bar. There are, of course, passport forgers in the real world and other forgers involved in organized crime, but a person who can forge a centuries-old monastic hand with a quill pen in faded (!) iron gall ink would be a rare find indeed, and one would need to ask how such a person could be found. The forgers of historical documents generally work for themselves and sell their own work (directly or through a broker), since it could be disastrous for them to let anyone know what they really do for a living. Forgers like Mark Hofmann

worked hard (and in his case even murdered) to keep anyone from knowing that their public profession of dealing in old documents was a lie and that the items that they had sold for thousands of dollars were worthless. So it is hard to picture Smith finding such a person and both of them trusting the other to remain silent.

The secret conspirator with all the necessary competencies is an unlikely and unnecessary ad hoc alternative to accepting Anastasopoulou's finding that this document was written naturally and spontaneously. It might not surprise us, then, that in Osborn's experience this spectre is usually raised by "those who would attack a genuine document" (1929, 375). Roy A. Huber and A. M. Headrick agree: "When all factors are considered, the likelihood of there being an involvement of a willing person, having the necessary qualifications, at the right time and place, seems extremely remote. Consideration of such a prospect is likely to be unwarranted" (1999, 273–274).

We have at least four sets of photographs of Mar Saba 65, and these have proved more than adequate to authenticate this manuscript as the quick and skillful work of someone who normally wrote that way—that is, a monk or scholar in the eighteenth century.

### Conclusion

A recurring theme in this paper is exegesis: most of these misconceptions could have been avoided if scholars had paid more attention to what the words and phrases in this letter mean in their larger literary contexts. In order to understand the letter itself, it is vital to read it against the literary background of Clement's undisputed works and the Alexandrian tradition of mystical exegesis. Only against this background will one realize that the language of initiation into the great mysteries is figurative, a common Middle Platonic metaphor for initiation into esoteric doctrines about the noetic world, and that a *mystikon euangelion* is a mystical gospel that was thought to convey these truths figuratively through allegorical exegesis, which is how elders like Clement communicated these doctrines to advanced students within the Alexandrian church. Likewise, only by reading the gospel excerpts within their Markan literary context and with an awareness of the Markan literary techniques that they employ can one recognize that the mystery of the kingdom of God is a mystery about God's reign and that the young man's linen sheet symbolizes his intention to die with Jesus by undergoing the "baptism" with which Jesus is baptized. Scholars employ these methods of investigation instinctively when studying a letter of Paul or a canonical

gospel, and they are equally appropriate here, for there is no other way to avoid presumptions about what the letter and the gospel excerpts convey. It is lamentable to see scholars reject authentic texts as forgeries due to their own reliance on presumptions, popular misconceptions, and thoroughly discredited arguments.

### References

- Akenson, Donald. (2002), *Saint Saul: A Skeleton Key to the Historical Jesus*. New York: Oxford UP.
- Anastasopoulou, Venetia. (2009), "A Handwriting Expert Weighs In." *Biblicalarchaeology.org*, 14 Oct. 2009. Web. 10 Dec. 2013.
- (2010), "Can a Document in Itself Reveal a Forgery?" *Biblicalarchaeology.org*, 22 July 2010. Web. 10 Dec. 2013.
- Brown, Scott G. (2005), *Mark's Other Gospel: Rethinking Morton Smith's Controversial Discovery*. Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier UP.
- (2006), "Factualizing the Folklore: Stephen Carlson's Case against Morton Smith." *Harvard Theological Review* 99: 291–327.
- (2007), Rev. of *The Secret Gospel of Mark Unveiled*, by Peter Jeffery. *Review of Biblical Literature*. *Bookreviews.org*, 15 Sept. 2007. Web. 10 Dec. 2013.
- (2008), "The Letter to Theodore: Stephen Carlson's Case against Clement's Authorship," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 16: 535–572.
- (2011), "My Thoughts on the Reports by Venetia Anastasopoulou." *Biblicalarchaeology.org*, 24 Jan. 2011. Web. 10 Dec. 2013.
- (2013), "Behind the Seven Veils, I: The Gnostic Life Setting of the Mystic Gospel of Mark." *Ancient Gospel or Modern Forgery? The Secret Gospel of Mark in Debate*. Ed. Tony Burke. Eugene, Oreg.: Cascade, 247–283.
- Carlson, Stephen C. (2005), *The Gospel Hoax: Morton Smith's Invention of Secret Mark*. Waco: Baylor UP.
- Conway, James V. P. (1959), *Evidential Documents*. Springfield, Ill.: Thomas.
- Criddle, Andrew H. (1995), "On the Mar Saba Letter Attributed to Clement of Alexandria," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 3: 215–220.
- Ehrman, Bart D. (2003), *Lost Christianities: The Battles for Scripture and the Faiths We Never Knew*. New York: Oxford UP.
- Ferguson, John. (1991), trans. *Clement of Alexandria: Stromateis, Books One to Three*. Fathers of the Church 85. Washington: Catholic University of America.
- García Martínez, Florentino. (1996) (ed.), *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: The Qumran Texts in English*. Trans. Wilfred G. E. Watson. 2nd ed. Leiden: Brill.
- Goodspeed, Edgar J. (1931), *Strange New Gospels*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- *The Tertullian Project*. Web. 10 Dec. 2013.
- Hall, J. R. Clark. (2004), *A Concise Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*. 4th ed. 1960. Supp. Herbert D. Meritt. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004.
- Harrison, Wilson R. (1958), *Suspect Documents: Their Scientific Examination*. New York: Frederick A. Praeger.

- Hedrick, Charles W. (2013), "Secret Mark: Moving On from Stalemate." *Ancient Gospel or Modern Forgery? The Secret Gospel of Mark in Debate*. Ed. Tony Burke. Eugene, Oreg.: Cascade, 30–66.
- Hedrick, Charles W. and Nikolaos Olympiou. (2000), "Secret Mark: New Photographs, New Witnesses," *The Fourth R* 13.5: 3–10.
- Hilton, Ordway. (1977), "Influence of Age and Illness on Handwriting: Identification Problems," *Forensic Science* 9: 161–172.
- Huber, Roy A., and A. M. Headrick. (1999), *Handwriting Identification: Facts and Fundamentals*. Boca Raton, Fla.: CRC.
- Jeffery, Peter. (2007), *The Secret Gospel of Mark Unveiled: Imagined Rituals of Sex, Death, and Madness in a Biblical Forgery*. New Haven: Yale UP.
- Joseph, Jacqueline A. (2000), "Genuine Tremor in Handwriting vs. the Tremor of Fraud: An Annotated Bibliography as It Relates to Questioned Document Examination." 2nd ed. *J. Joseph & Associates*. JT Research LLC, Mar. 2000. Web. 22 Dec. 2013.
- Koester, Helmut, and Stephen J. Patterson. (1991), "Secret Mark," *The Fourth R* 4.3: 14–16. Rpt. in *The Complete Gospels: Annotated Scholars Version*. Ed. Robert J. Miller. Sonoma: Polebridge, 1992, 402–405.
- Koppenhaver, Katherine M. (2002), *Attorney's Guide to Document Examination*. Westport, Conn.: Quorum Books.
- (2007), *Forensic Document Examination: Principles and Practice*. Totowa, N.J.: Humana.
- Köstenberger, Andreas J., L. Scott Kellum, and Charles L. Quarles. (2009), *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown: An Introduction to the New Testament*. Nashville: B&H.
- Landry, David. (2009), "Noncanonical Texts: *The Da Vinci Code* and Beyond," *Word & World* 29: 367–379.
- Osborn, Albert S. (1929), *Questioned Documents*. 2nd ed. Albany, N.Y.: Boyd.
- Pantuck, Allan J., and Scott G. Brown. (2008), "Morton Smith as M. Madiotes: Stephen Carlson's Attribution of *Secret Mark* to a Bald Swindler," *Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus* 6: 106–125.
- Parker, Pierson. (1973), "An Early Christian Cover-up?" Rev. of *The Secret Gospel and Clement of Alexandria and a Secret Gospel of Mark*, by Morton Smith. *New York Times Book Review* 22 July 1973: 5.
- (1974), "On Professor Morton Smith's Find at Mar-Saba," *Anglican Theological Review* 56: 53–57.
- Perkins, Pheme. (2007), *Introduction to the Synoptic Gospels*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Puri, Dewan K. S. (1974), "Tremors: Forged or Genuine," *International Criminal Police Review* 282: 241–244.
- Quesnell, Quentin. (1975), "The Mar Saba Clementine: A Question of Evidence," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 37: 48–67.
- Schmidt, Daryl D. (1991), *The Gospel of Mark with Introduction, Notes, and Original Text Featuring the New Scholars Version Translation*. Sonoma: Polebridge.
- Smith, Edward R. (2011), *The Temple Sleep of the Rich Young Ruler: How Lazarus Became the Evangelist John*. Great Barrington, Mass.: SteinerBooks.
- Smith, Morton. (1973), *Clement of Alexandria and a Secret Gospel of Mark*. Cambridge: Harvard UP.
- (1973), *The Secret Gospel: The Discovery and Interpretation of the Secret Gospel according to Mark*. New York: Harper & Row.

- Taylor, Joan E. (2003), *Jewish Women Philosophers of First-Century Alexandria: Philo's "Therapeutae" Reconsidered*. Oxford: Oxford UP.
- Thisted, Ronald, and Bradley Efron. (1987), "Did Shakespeare Write a Newly-Discovered Poem?" *Biometrika* 74: 445–455.
- Viklund, Roger, and Timo S. Paananen. (2013), "Distortion of the Scribal Hand in the Images of Clement's *Letter to Theodore*," *Vigiliae Christianae* 67: 235–247.
- Watson, Francis. (2010), "Beyond Suspicion: On the Authorship of the Mar Saba Letter and the Secret Gospel of Mark," *Journal of Theological Studies*, ns, 61: 128–170.
- Wolfson, Harry A. (1962), *Philo: Foundations of Religious Philosophy in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*. Vol. 1. Cambridge: Harvard UP.

# A Euripidised Clement of Alexandria or a Christianised Euripides? The Interplay of Authority between Quoting Author and Cited Author

ARGYRI G. KARANASIOU  
Saarland University Germany

## 1. Introduction

A reception research paper would customarily seek to examine the extent to which Clement preserves Euripidean drama in his writings, but this paper by contrast aims to discover the dimensions of the interdependence between authorial identities. In the history of thought, Clement's reception of Greek literature provides a characteristic paradigm of mutual influence and adaptation (mainly in the form of reception and transformation) between Greek and Christian culture. The phenomenon of the "Hellenisation of Christianity" that thrives in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE has a direct impact on the "Christianisation of Hellenism."<sup>1</sup> Hence, the presupposition of a "Clementinean Euripides" foreshadowed by a "Euripidean Clement"<sup>2</sup> is totally justified.

Clement could be regarded as a "Euripidean" author because of his clear preference for Euripides over other Greek dramatists.<sup>3</sup> Nonetheless, what appears to be a wide-ranging influence of Euripides on Clement reveals itself as a modified "Clementinean" reading of Euripides. Thus, the apologist's Euripidean

---

<sup>1</sup> Drobner 2008, 672–690, esp. 674; Stead 1994, book-cover; on the idea of Christianity being a hybrid culture see Rankin (2006, 19 n. 72) referring to Tanner 1997, 114–115.

<sup>2</sup> On Clement's Hellenisation being complete and far from popular theology see Chadwick 1966, 64.

<sup>3</sup> On the fact that in his extant works—except for 618 borrowings from Plato and 243 from Homer—there can be listed 122 from Euripides, 23 from Sophocles, and 16 from Aeschylus; see Stählin and Treu 1980, XXVIII, 30, 39, and 56; Rankin 2006, 131; on citations from Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides in the *Protrepticus* cf. Marcovich 1995, 226, 227, and 230; on an analysis of the lyric quotations from Sophocles and Euripides, see Karanasiou 2002, 26, 134, and 177–186.

quotations do not aim at elucidating the dramatist's philosophic views but rather serve as a model of thought to convincingly introduce the Christian faith to the reader by confirming the dogma through a non-Christian literary source. Through his particular way of quoting Euripides' text, Clement invents a Christian *subtext* and unmasks the "*alter* Euripides." In *reusing* the Greek poet, the apologist expresses Christian thinking through Euripidean language and creates a semantic duality that shifts the emphasis from the obvious pagan meaning of the original to the hidden Christian meaning in the content of his writings. But the latter does not erase the former: even if a tension is apparent between the two, they coexist. Clement's allegorical interpretation dispels all discontinuity between the two semantic levels.

This analysis focuses on the *Stromateis*. It is a philosophical work titled as "counterpanes" or "throws"; the misleading translation *Miscellanies*—as Tripolitis correctly observes<sup>4</sup>—leads to a classification that fails to do justice to the full scope of this work. Clement reflects on his writings as ὑπομνήματα<sup>5</sup>—i.e. *memoranda* (*Str.* 4, 2, 4.1; 6, 1, 1.1)—and refers to analogous texts, the συναγωγαί, which are not confined to a single literary *genre* (οὐ κατὰ εἶδος ἕκαστον κεχώρισται 6, 1, 2.1). Interpreting the title (ὡς αὐτό που τοῦνομά φησι 4, 2, 4.1), he invokes the image of a "patchwork" (διστρωμένα),<sup>6</sup> since his composition is comprised of connections passing from one thing to another (ἀπ' ἄλλου εἰς ἄλλο συνεχῆς μετιόντα) and allusions that create an association between two heterogeneous things (ἕτερον μὲν τι κατὰ τὸν εἶρμόν τῶν λόγων μηνύοντα, ἐνδεικνύμενα δὲ ἄλλο τι). Hence, Clement intends the *Stromateis* to provide a personal account, a vivid memoir of his knowledge (ὑπομνήματα...ζώπυρα 6, 1, 2.2), and consciously leaves the reader laboring in order to attain wisdom (μετὰ ἰδρωτός ἢ ζήτησις...τὸν πόνον...τῆς γνώσεως 6, 1, 2.3). Correspondingly, by verbally mirroring the disorganised unsystematic<sup>7</sup> impression of an "amalgam"—Clement's deliberate decision<sup>8</sup>—the title becomes itself the *a priori* justification for the work's lack of strict structure.

<sup>4</sup> On Origenes imitating Clement according to St. Jerome (*Letter* 70, 4) and writing 10 books of *Miscellanies* where Scriptural views were compared with Greek philosophers and confirmed by quotations from the latter, see Tripolitis 1985, 124.

<sup>5</sup> LSJ 1889.

<sup>6</sup> LSJ 1656 on *Miscellanies* as a title, see Gell. *Praef.* 7; about Plutarch's *Stromateis* see Eus. *PE.* 1.7; on Origenes' *Stromateis* see Tripolitis 1985, 124; cf. Osborne 2010, 273.

<sup>7</sup> Tripolitis 2002, 106; Chadwick 1966, 31; Waszink 1981, 432; on the contrary Rankin 2006, 126 observes that each of the first seven books begins with a *narratio* including elements of both a *confirmatio* of Christian faith and a *refutatio* of paganism.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Eus. *Eccl. Hist.* 6, 13, and 4–8; Osborne 2010, 273 n. 9; Stead 1994, 92.



A key theme of the *Stromateis* is that Greek writers foster their wisdom by plagiarising<sup>9</sup> each other (κλοπήν τῆς ἀληθείας 6, 2, 4.3; κλεπτικὸν διελέγξας εἶδος 6, 2, 5.2), providing themselves the incriminating evidence for their practice (μάρτυρας τῆς κλοπῆς αὐτοὺς καθ' ἑαυτῶν 6, 2, 4.3; τὰ οἰκεῖα...παρ' ἀλλήλων ὑφαιρούμενοι βεβαιοῦσι μὲν τὸ κλέπται εἶναι 6, 2, 4.4). In this sense, Clement stresses the double nature of Greek wisdom; on the one hand the Greeks are “thieves” (κλέπται)—i.e. plagiarists of each other—and on the other hand they seemingly act like unconscious “usurpers” (σφετερισταὶ) of foreign knowledge, imparting Christian thinking to pagan readers (σφετερίζεσθαι δ' ὁμῶς καὶ ἄκοντες τὴν παρ' ἡμῶν ἀλήθειαν εἰς τοὺς ὁμοφύλους λάθρα διαδείκνυνται 6, 2, 4.4). He comments that plagiarism refers both to language and content (κατὰ τοὺς λόγους τε καὶ τὰ δόγματα 6, 2, 15.1) and asserts that it is recognizable solely by an expert capable of revealing its true dimensions (τῷ διορᾶν δυναμένῳ 6, 2, 25.1).<sup>10</sup>

## 2. Citation Analysis

The discourse of the *Stromateis* is by and large *apologetic*—that is, the author seeks to expound a given position to either believers or non-believers without any intention of conversion of his addressees.<sup>11</sup> By contrast, in a *protreptic* writing the author intends to convert by exhortation non-believers, and in a *paraenetic* writing addresses an exhortation to believers.<sup>12</sup> But an apology for Christ could easily turn into a *polemic* against idolatry. However, no definite distinction between *polemic*, *protreptic*, and *apologetic* can be detected among the early Christians. The term *apologetic* seems to have prevailed only due to its widespread Christian usage.<sup>13</sup> Hence, it is not clear whether Clement aims at impressing the pagans, at reconciling the Christians with pagan philosophy, at arming them with new weapons in polemic,<sup>14</sup> or at simply making Christianity accessible to a more educated audience.<sup>15</sup> Nonetheless, it remains undisputed that Clement encourages mature Christians to see in pagan learning a possible set of tools for understanding the Scriptures. For this purpose he combines phil-

<sup>9</sup> On the theory of plagiarism see Le Boulluec and Voulet 1.1981, 13–18.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Dillon 1990, 255 on Proclus' Parmenidean Commentary 661, 21; 662, 10, where one must be capable of observing the *eikōn* of reality or willing to follow an analogy.

<sup>11</sup> Rankin 2006, 125–26.

<sup>12</sup> Rankin 2006, 8.

<sup>13</sup> Edwards 2008, 549–564, esp. 549–550.

<sup>14</sup> Edwards 2008, 549–564, esp. 556.

<sup>15</sup> Rankin 2006, 127–128.

osophical themes with rhetoric diction,<sup>16</sup> following the ideal of the Second Sophistic, namely the Platonic ῥήτωρ. In this sense, through his citations, he blends persuasion with logical argument.

Furthermore Clement confesses that his work serves as a remedy for forgetfulness (λήθης φάρμακον), as a record-keeping (ὑπομνήματα εἰς γέρας), as an outline (ὑποτύπωσις) of what he had heard from his teachers (σκιαγραφία ὧν κατηξιώθην ἐπακοῦσαι *Str.* 1, 1, 11.1; cf. *Pl. Phaedr.* 274e–275a; *Str.* 1, 1, 1.1),<sup>17</sup> and as a pattern evoking the mental image of a meadow (ἐν μὲν οὖν τῷ λειμῶνι τὰ ἄνθη ποικίλως ἀνθοῦντα *Str.* 6, 1, 2.1; λειμῶνος δίκην 6, 1, 2.2) where the colorful picture of flowers is perceived in textual terms as a diversity of material (πεποίκιλται). The latter description alludes to a different reading of the title. Since by using the term ὑποτύπωσις<sup>18</sup> Clement could specifically imply the rhetoric device of the same name that defines a *vivid illustration* either of facts or places<sup>19</sup> appealing to “the mind’s eye.”<sup>20</sup> Thus, in literally referring to a place (i.e. a meadow), which is to be imagined by the reader, he could link the title with this visual experience.

It is this principle of variety and combination that the reader witnesses in discrepancies at many levels of the work where contraries are combined: poetry and prose, pagan and Christian literary sources, philosophers and poets, popular themes and complex doctrines. Clement’s material is the result of recollections gathered (τοῖς δ’ ὡς ἔτυχεν ἐπὶ μνήμην ἔλθοῦσι) and reveals no specific order (μήτε τῇ τάξει μήτε τῇ φράσει διακεκαθαρμένοις), but is rather consciously scattered and blended (διεσπαρμένοις δὲ ἐπίτηδες ἀναμίξ 6, 1, 2.1–2). Nevertheless, the term ἀναμίξ, which denotes mingling, does not totally exclude the operation of an organizing mind. Moreover, the association of the term ποικιλία with a text connotes the synthesis of a variety of themes and styles.

In formal terms, Clement’s work combines prose with poetic quotations. If Plutarch through his wine-metaphor (κρᾶσις)<sup>21</sup> sees in poetry a preliminary stage of philosophy,<sup>22</sup> Clement sees in philosophy a preparatory stage (προπαιδεία) for theology and Christian wisdom (*Str.* 1, 5, 30.1; 1, 7, 37.1; 6, 8, 62.1). Through God’s providence, philosophy was given to the Greeks to arm them against sin, just as the Law was given to Jews.<sup>23</sup> This idea echoes the Neopy-

<sup>16</sup> Fowler 2010, 113.

<sup>17</sup> Osborne 2010, 274.

<sup>18</sup> LSJ 1900.

<sup>19</sup> Quintilian, *Inst.* 9, 2, 43–44 on the figure being also known as “topography.”

<sup>20</sup> Quintilian, *Inst.* 9, 2, 40–42 on quoting an unknown phrase from Cicero.

<sup>21</sup> Plut. *de aud.* 15 E.

<sup>22</sup> Plut. *de aud.* 15 F; *de aud.* 37 B.

<sup>23</sup> Chadwick 1966, 50; Ferguson 1970, 203–204.

thagorean Numenius who had already described Plato as “Moses speaking Attic” (Μωυσῆς ἀττικίζων *Str.* 1, 22, 150.3–4).<sup>24</sup> In the same spirit, Clement’s farmer-metaphor (*Str.* 1, 1, 17.4) illustrates how he will prepare the “land of the Hellenes” by using what is best in philosophy (*Str.* 1, 1, 15.3)<sup>25</sup> so that they can receive the true doctrine. Moreover, he perceives Christian revelation and Greek philosophy as expressions of the same source, of the divine *Logos* (Reason)<sup>26</sup> that is innate to every human soul.<sup>27</sup> Hence, Greek philosophy originates from God (*Str.* 6, 8, 62–63; 6, 1, 2.4).<sup>28</sup> Christ is the uniting principle of all the separate fragments of knowledge (*Str.* 1, 13, 57; 6, 10, 81).<sup>29</sup> Nonetheless, according to Clement, Christian thinkers are in this sense transferred (μετατεθέντες)<sup>30</sup> and transplanted (μεταμοσχευθέντες)<sup>31</sup> into Christ’s intellectual paradise (ὁ παράδεισος ὁ πνευματικὸς ἡμῶν ὁ σωτὴρ 6, 1, 2.4)—that is, only Christian thinkers have access to higher levels of wisdom. Therefore, the reorientation and transition to Christian philosophy is defined as change (μεταβολή) to a fertile plantation (τῆς φυτείας εἰς εὐκαρπίαν).

However, in addition to pagans that need to be converted, there are also Christians who require proof. By integrating philosophy into his apologetic work, Clement demonstrates that, in order to refute pagan philosophy, one has first to philosophise (*Str.* 1, 2; 1, 19.1).<sup>32</sup> Thus, his poetic quotations function as means of persuasion, and justify faith through philosophic reasoning even though they are not *per se* intellectual arguments.<sup>33</sup> The theory of Greek plagiarism<sup>34</sup> or “intellectual theft” (τῆς κατὰ διάνοιαν ἐλληνικῆς κλοπῆς 6, 2, 25.1) is part of this reasoning and authorises Clement to “reborrow” the “stolen” wisdom.

His practice of citing pagan authors is eclectic in method. He uses this term positively (*Str.* 1, 7, 37.6), defining his philosophy as “ἐκλεκτικόν”—a selective

<sup>24</sup> Ferguson 1970, 201; Waszink 1981, 433.

<sup>25</sup> Rankin 2006, 127–128.

<sup>26</sup> Osborne 2010, 281; Chadwick 1966, 58.

<sup>27</sup> Osborne 2010, 281.

<sup>28</sup> Osborn 2005, 201; cf. Justin who has already stated: “The teachings of Plato are not alien to those of Christ” (*Apol.* 2, 13), see Hatch AND Fairbairn 1891, 126–127.

<sup>29</sup> Chadwick 1967, chapter 10, 168–181, esp. 170; Osborn 1987, 337.

<sup>30</sup> LSJ 1117.

<sup>31</sup> LSJ 1114.

<sup>32</sup> Rankin 2006, 130; Ferguson 1970, 237; Tripolitis 2002, 106.

<sup>33</sup> Osborn 2005, 101.

<sup>34</sup> A catalogue of “borrowings” from the Old Testament is found in *Str.* 5<sup>th</sup> book but no modern scholar would ever characterize them as “thefts,” see on this Edwards 2008, 549–564, esp. 555–556.

whole that collects what is true.<sup>35</sup> This principle is illustrated by his bee metaphor (*Str.* 1, 6, 33.6).<sup>36</sup> As Osborne correctly notices, the bee symbolises the act of collecting with discrimination, conscious choice, and quality.<sup>37</sup> Correspondingly, his “selective quoting”<sup>38</sup> is a process of extracting the best from literature, including Greek poetry. Therefore, Clement’s work cannot be reduced to that of a compiler who collects thematically and connects everything relevant to a certain theme.

However, he neither *recaptures* the spirit of pagan poets for their own sake, as Plutarch did with the Platonic dialogues,<sup>39</sup> nor does he merely *reproduce* their work. Clement’s citations deliberately alter the meaning of the original text. His adaptation strategy conforms to the general citation practice of his time; he follows the concept of Plutarch’s *rewriting* (μεταγραφὴ, *transcriptio*) or *correcting* (ἐπανόρθωσις), but mainly on the semantic level.<sup>40</sup> Thus, he applies an “improved” or “decoded” reading to the transmitted original text. The most distinctive feature of Clement’s citations is the fact that, far from simply modifying single words or abbreviating passages, his “transforming” influence unfolds its power beyond the linguistic level.

II. 1. *Str.* 5, c. 11 / 70, 2–6, O. Stählin / L. Früchtel vol. II, 373<sup>41</sup>  
Inc. F 912 N<sup>2</sup> (=Kannicht)

σοὶ τῷ πάντων μεδέοντι χοῆν  
πέλανόν τε φέρων, Ζεὺς εἴτ’ Αἰδης  
ὀνομαζόμενος στέργεις σὺ δέ μοι  
θυσίαν ἄπορον παγκαρπείας  
δέξαι πλήρη προχυτίαν

(Clement’s interruption)

σὺ γὰρ ἔν τε θεοῖς τοῖς οὐρανίδαις  
σκῆπτρον τὸ Διὸς μεταχειρίζων  
χθονίων θ’ Αἰδη μετέχεις ἀρχῆς.

(Clement’s interruption)

<sup>35</sup> Osborne 2010, 272.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. *Str.* 6.1, 6.2.1 where Clement compares his eclectic method to a meadow in which various plants bloom.

<sup>37</sup> Osborne 2010, 271–272.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. the bee-metaphor in Plut.*de aud.* 32 E–F.

<sup>39</sup> Stead 1994, 65.

<sup>40</sup> Plut.*de aud.* 33B–34B; König 2010, 338; Karanasiou 2016, forthcoming.

<sup>41</sup> On this quotation as part of a general framework of the reception of Greek tragedy in Greco-Roman antiquity see Karanasiou 2002, 181–182.

πέμψον μὲν φῶς ψυχὰς ἀνέρων  
 τοῖς βουλομένοις ἄθλους προμαθεῖν  
 πόθεν ἔβλαστον, τίς ρίζα κακῶν,  
 τίνα δεῖ μακάρων ἐκθυσσάμενους  
 εὐρεῖν μόχθων ἀνάπαυλαν. (9 an an^// 15 an an^)

“To thee, the Lord of all, I bring cakes and libations too, O Zeus, or Hades would’st thou choose be called; Do thou accept my offering of all fruits, rare, full, poured forth. For thou who, ‘midst the heavenly gods, Jove’s sceptre sway’st, dost also share the rule of those on earth. Send light to human souls that fain would know whence conflicts spring, and what the root of ills, and of the blessed gods to whom due rites of sacrifice we needs must pay, that so we may from troubles find repose.”<sup>42</sup>

Clement quotes the fragment<sup>43</sup> which mentions the name of the poet and characterises him as “ὁ ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς φιλόσοφος” (Str. 5, 11, 70.2). In these verses the omnipotence of God—who is imprecisely addressed at a libation by the chorus as σοί / σύ—is manifested. Therefore, since the God’s identity remains unknown, Clement seizes the opportunity offered by the ambiguity of the ritual address (neither Zeus nor Hades) and reads in these verses the idea of Christ as the Redeemer of mankind.

The apologist continues on his *interpretatio christiana* by employing allegorical symbols; twice the citation process is interrupted by his “teaching.” Clement understands the first five quoted verses as referring to the omnipotent God. Further, he associates the sacrificial offering evoked in these verses with the self-sacrifice of Christ. According to Clement, the next three verses describe how Jesus participates in the power of the reign of both Heaven and Death. The last five verses of the chorus are interpreted as the mortals’ plea for liberation from the great pains of existence.

The discrepancy between the pagan setting of the original and the Christian thinking in Clement’s writing is noticeable. Nonetheless, Clement seems to build his reading on the lyric and religious character of the “reborrowed” verses. Thus, Euripides’ characterisation as co-singer (συνῳδός Str. 5, 11, 70.2)—a rather unusual remark within the context of the Euripidean reception in the Im-

<sup>42</sup> Translated in: [www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/](http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/); for a translation in french see Le Boulluec and Voulet I.1981, 140–143; for the relevant commentary see Le Boulluec 2.1981, 240–242.

<sup>43</sup> On the first three verses (up to ὀνομάζει / ὀνομαζόμενος) that have already been quoted by the Peripatetic Satyros (3<sup>rd</sup> century BC) in his Euripides’ *Vita*, see Hunt 1912, F 37 col. 3, 6–20.

perial period—does not serve as a laudatory utterance but rather stresses the ritual setting of the original.

By introducing the fragment in his text with the phrase οὐκ οἶδ' ὅπως αἰνισσόμενος (*Str.* 5, 11, 70.2) Clement seems to presume that Euripides had the intention to encode Christian meaning in his verses. In this way, the phrase, far from being a simple opening formula, functions as Clement's pretext for his interpretation. The quotation is embedded in a context that reflects on the approach to γνῶσις by the Greeks. The apologist states that *even* the Greeks (καὶ Ἕλληνες) worship the life of wisdom (γνωστικὸν βίον, *Str.* 5, 11, 69.6), *even* if they do not possess any real knowledge (καίτοι μὴ εἰδότες) of the essence of γνῶσις. Ultimately, Clement argues that the Greeks seem to strive for true wisdom by merely alluding to it.

The emphatic repetition of the usage of the second person—typical for a ritual appeal—leaves no doubt about the fact that only one deity is addressed in Euripides' text. The divinity who receives the offering (σοί, σὺ...δέξαι) is one and the same as the divinity who reigns over both the celestial and the underworld gods (σὺ... ἔν τε θεοῖς τοῖς οὐρανίδαις / χθονίων θ' μετέχεις ἀρχῆς) and as the divinity who will respond to the plea (πέμψον). Hence, the poet describes a divine sovereign who governs all deities, and who is different from Zeus and Hades, but being omnipresent shares in their power. It is this status of omnipotence, expressed at the outset of the prayer through σοὶ τῷ πάντων μεδέοντι, which the second σὺ defines more precisely.

In contrast to the Euripidean meaning of the verses, Clement's interpretation is not based on syntactical grounds. He separates the third σὺ from the two preceding pronominal forms and understands it allegorically. In general he transforms the visual image (*eikôn*) of a pagan ritual into a new "symbolic image" confirming the Christian belief in the existence of Father and Son. Thus, he is not using the *eikôn* as a "direct representation of an original."<sup>44</sup> Moreover he alters the signs of this *eikôn* by replacing them with symbols which—as Dillon maintains—represent in an indirect way and do not precisely mirror reality.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, he misuses the power of the similitudes and ambiguities of the "ceremony image" to intensify the effect of his symbols. Hence, he employs a combined allegorical method of Pythagorean provenance as explained in Proclus' *Timaeus* Commentary (I 94, 27 f. *Diehl*), where something might be repre-

<sup>44</sup> Dillon 1990, 250–252.

<sup>45</sup> Dillon 1990, 250–253 offers an insightful analysis of the Neoplatonic theory of *symbolon* and *eikôn* as it is demonstrated in Proclus' Commentary of *Timaeus* (I 29, 31 ff. *Diehl*) and of the *Republic* (I 73, 11 ff. *Kroll*).

sented “in images through symbols” (ἐν εἰκόσι διὰ τινῶν συμβόλων).<sup>46</sup> The same holds probably also for Clement’s metaphors of the “meadow” and the “patchwork,” since beyond the evoked visual effect (*eikōn*), the terms are symbolically interpreted.

Consequently, the dramatist’s text serves here as a *pro*-argument which confirms the accuracy of the apologist’s analysis. Although there are some discernible traces of admiration in his amazed reaction (πάνυ θαυμαστῶς *Str.* 5, 11, 70.2) to Euripides’ hidden γνώσις, Clement indirectly lessens the value of the poet’s testimony through the ironic phrase οὐκ εἰδὼς (*Str.* 5, 11, 70.4) which implies that Euripides, as a Greek author, is not capable of knowing anything, but merely of having an intuition.

II. 2. *Str.* 4, c. 26 / 172, 1, O. Stählin / L. Früchtel vol. II, 324, 18 f.<sup>47</sup>  
Inc. F 911 N<sup>2</sup> (=Kannicht)

χρύσειαι δὴ μοι πτέρυγες περὶ νώτῳ  
καὶ τὰ Σειρήνων ἐρόεντα πέδιλα [ἀρμόζεται]  
βάσομαι τ’ ἐς αἰθέρα πουλὺν ἀερθεῖς  
Ζηνὶ προσμίζων (e\_D\_// e\_D\_e// e u D\_// e\_e(?) x Stasimon)

“Golden wings are round my back, and I am shod with the winged sandals of the Sirens; and I shall go aloft into the wide ether, to hold converse with Zeus.”<sup>48</sup>

These verses expressing an ascension into Ether and the union with Zeus probably belong to a *stasimon* of *Archelaos*.<sup>49</sup> They are already mentioned in the Satyros’ *Vita* of Euripides.<sup>50</sup> The biographer (3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE) suggests that these lines allegorically allude to a journey to the Macedonian King Archelaos, who would be represented in these lyrics by Zeus. Convinced by the biographer and

<sup>46</sup> Dillon 1990, 254.

<sup>47</sup> On this quotation as part of a general framework of the reception of Greek tragedy in Greco-Roman antiquity see Karanasiou 2002, 179–181.

<sup>48</sup> Translated in: [www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/](http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/)

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Plut. *An seni sit ger. republ.* 5. 786D quoting the first verse; cf. Plut. *De E delph.* I 384 D where Plutarch cites F 969 N<sup>2</sup> and understands that in these verses Euripides is proud of his intellectual superiority and rejects the luxurious presents of King Archelaos; Cataudella 1939, 44–46 n. 12 associates this testimony with Euripides’ play *Archelaos*; in contrast to these opinions see Meineke *Frag.Com.Gr.*, 1847, 707 and Nauck *TrGF* 1964, 674 who agree that F 969 N<sup>2</sup> is not of a Euripidean provenance.

<sup>50</sup> Hunt 1912, 161 f., F 39, col. XVII 30–39 and F 39, col. XVIII 7–16, 161 f.; cf. Arrighetti 1964, 73 and 139.

the *pseudo*-Euripidean epistle IV,<sup>51</sup> Cataudella<sup>52</sup> agrees with this explanation and allocates the fragment (as Kuiper<sup>53</sup> did) to *Archelaos*—performed probably as a single play in Macedonia in 407 BCE<sup>54</sup>—and sees in these lines Euripides’ joy in leaving Athens behind him.<sup>55</sup>

Plutarch quotes merely the expression *χρύσειαι...πτέρυγες* and mentions the name of the poet.<sup>56</sup> He interprets the phrase allegorically contrasting it with Plato’s phrases *ψυχὴ...ἐπτερωμένη* or *τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς πτέρωμα*.<sup>57</sup> Plutarch uses the image of Euripides’ “golden wings” solely as a metaphor related to the ascent of the virtuous soul and corrects it by interpreting the Platonic references as “celestial wings.” He does not refer either to the Ether or to the Zeus of the original.

At the end of Clement’s book the quotation from Euripides serves as a *coda* that supports his interpretation as a positive paradigm. It is clear that he confronts Euripides in order to disseminate the “true philosophy” (*Str.* 6, 1, 1.1; cf. the earlier testimony of Justin, 2 *Apol.* 13).<sup>58</sup> The theme of the context is the concept of “ὁμοίωσις θεῷ” (cf. Pl. *Theaet.* 265). According to Clement the wise man bears resemblance to and is an *imitans* of God (θεὸν μιμεῖσθαι...τῷ γνωστικῷ). In this sense, the apologist gives an example of the fact that many poets were regarded as godlike (θεοειδέας...δίους...θεοεικέλους). Nonetheless, the original and its new context in Clement are arbitrarily linked in a kind of “forced harmony” under the authority of the quoting author.

The fragment is inserted in this context through the phrase *ὁ μὲν Εὐριπίδης* and is followed antithetically by *ἐγὼ δὲ*, which is the opening line for Clement’s allegorical analysis. The marked contrast between the two expressions differs in tone from the objective and merely functional negative opening remark *ἄντικρυς εἶρηκεν / λέγει* (*Str.* 5, 14, 92.2; 5, 14, 115.4; cf. 5, 14, 113.1) and the affirma-

<sup>51</sup> *Epistolographi Graeci* 1873, 277 Hercher.

<sup>52</sup> Cataudella 1939, 41.

<sup>53</sup> 1913, 242.

<sup>54</sup> On the possibility of a performance as a single play see Müller 1984, 69–70, n. 198, 199, 202, and 203; in contrast, on the assumption of a performance as part of a trilogy see Webster 1967, 252 f..

<sup>55</sup> On ascribing the passage to *Antiope* where it would be expressing the reaction of the chorus to Amphiion’s monody see Wilamowitz-Moellendorf 1935, 450 n. 1; Webster 1967, 205–207 favouring the *parodos* as the original context; Kambitsis 1972, 134–135; Jouan and van Looy 1998, 270.

<sup>56</sup> Plut. *An seni sit ger. republ.* 5.786D.

<sup>57</sup> Pl. *Phaedr.* 246c, 246e and generally 246b–248e, II 249–53 Burnet.

<sup>58</sup> Tripolitis 2002, 104; on the conception of the Christian faith being the “absolutely true philosophy” (*verissima philosophia*), which recurs later in Augustine *De Academicis* 3.20–22, 42, Civ. 10.32, see Drobner 2008, 672–690, esp. 678.



tive succinct phrases λέγει (*Str.* 1, 8, 40.3; 1, 8, 41.1), φησι (*Str.* 5, 14, 112.1), or γράφει (*Str.* 5, 14, 112.2). The antithetic formula involves a value judgement implying the superior status of the Christian *exegesis*. In “correcting” the original, Clement replaces the “golden wings” and the “winged sandals of the Sirens” with “Christ’s spirit” (πνεῦμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ) and changes the direction “to Ether”—mentioned in the original—to “his Jerusalem” (εἰς τὴν Ἱερουσαλὴμ τὴν ἐμὴν). He supports his associations by referring to the Stoics’ notion of the “κυρίως πόλις” and to Plato’s celestial “πόλις ἐν οὐρανῷ.” He ends the 4<sup>th</sup> book of the *Stromateis* by observing that the poets’ present images of the “πόλις on earth” comparable to the “ἐκκλησία on earth” and expands upon this thought with reference to the ideal states of the Hyperboreioi and the Êlysia.

In conclusion, we witness here two divergent allegorical interpretations by two different authors, Satyros and Clement. The former exegesis, of the biographer, favours a realistic historical representation of Euripides, searching for the true meaning of this passage according to the poet’s life. The latter, of the Christian apologist, legitimates his faith.

II. 3. *Str.* 6, c. 2 / 24, 4 ff., O. Stählin / L. Früchtel vol. II 441,9 ff.<sup>59</sup>  
*Chrysippos* F 839, 12–14 N<sup>2</sup> (=Kannicht)

θνήσκει δὲ οὐδὲν τῶν γιγνομένων,  
 διακρινόμενον δ’ ἄλλο πρὸς ἄλλο  
 μορφήν ἐτέραν ἐπέδειξεν (an an<sup>^</sup>)

“But nothing dies of things that are; but being dissolved, one from the other, shows another form.”<sup>60</sup>

These verses (vv. 12–14) belong to a longer passage (vv. 1–14) that is often quoted in the literature of the Hellenistic and Imperial period. It involves a scientific issue and is ascribed by Webster<sup>61</sup> to a *stasimon* of Euripides’ *Chrysippos*, where it probably follows a messenger’s consolation speech to Pelops after the suicide of his son. Nonetheless, no ancient author who quotes this fragment refers to its original context or even to the plot of the tragedy.

<sup>59</sup> On this quotation as part of a general framework of the reception of Greek tragedy in Greco-Roman antiquity see Karanasiou 2002, 185.

<sup>60</sup> Translated in: [www.earlychristianwritings.com/text](http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text).

<sup>61</sup> Webster 1967, 112.

The dependence of this passage on Anaxagoras can be traced back to Heraclitus<sup>62</sup> (1<sup>st</sup> century CE), who quotes vv. 8–11 as evidence for a scientific cosmogony in Homeric mythology and in support of the thesis that Euripides embraces Anaxagoras' theory of the mixture of the dry element (earth) and the damp element (water).<sup>63</sup> In an analogous context, Marcus Aurelius<sup>64</sup> quotes vv. 9–11, adds a short *paraphrasis*, and relates them to the change of the elements without referring to Euripides, Anaxagoras, or Epicurus.<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, verses 1–7 are used by Sextus Empiricus<sup>66</sup> within a broader context regarding the relationship of music to philosophy and poetry. Sextus introduces them by the phrase *παρὰ τοῖς τραγικοῖς* observing that songs in tragedy might comprise scientific theories (*φυσικὸν λόγον*), but he does not refer either to Euripides or to Anaxagoras.

In particular, verses 12–14 are constantly associated with science long before Clement. Thus they are already introduced in Theophrastus' work<sup>67</sup> (4<sup>th</sup> century BCE)—a main source for the pre-Peripatetic physical philosophy<sup>68</sup>—by the phrase *κατὰ τὸ φιλοσοφηθὲν ὑπὸ τοῦ τραγικοῦ* as a *pro*-argument for the continued existence of the universe and the elements, since every element could convert its nature into something different. Moreover, Philo of Alexandria (1<sup>st</sup> century CE) quotes this passage four times in the context of the theory of the dissolution (*διάλυσις*) of the elements and their return (*ἐπάνοδος*, *ἀνάκαμψις*) to their origin by way of a synthesis (*σύνθεσις*, *μετανάστασις*, *κρᾶσις*) that secures their continued existence. Firstly, he cites verses 8–14 in *De aetern. mundi* (11), 30.<sup>69</sup> Euripides' fragment is mentioned in connection with the origin of mankind and the indestructibility of the universe. Except for Plato's *Timaeus*,<sup>70</sup> Euripides is used as further proof for the argument that human beings are mixtures (*κρᾶσις*) of particles of the four elements.<sup>71</sup> Although this theory alludes to the

<sup>62</sup> *Allegor. Hom.* 22,11, 27 Buffière.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. VS II Diels / Kranz, 1952, B 4, B5, B 12, B 13, B 14, esp. B 17.

<sup>64</sup> *Ad se ipsum* 7, 50 Dalfen.

<sup>65</sup> The only case where the fragment is not associated with scientific theories is Diogenes Laertius (7.60, II 322, 15 Long), who in the *Vita* of the Stoic Zenōn cites the first verse of this long passage as an example for the definition of the terms *ποίημα* and *ποίησις* without referring to either poet or work but stating his dependence on Poseidonius' *Περὶ λέξεως εισαγωγῇ*, F 44, Poseidonius I.59 Theiler; cf. Kidd 1988, 198–199.

<sup>66</sup> *Adv. Math.* 6, 17 Mau.

<sup>67</sup> *Physic. Opinion.* Fr. 12, 27, in *Doxographi Graeci* 490 Diels.

<sup>68</sup> On the text transmission of this work see Mansfeld 1992, 63–66.

<sup>69</sup> VI 82–83 Cohn-Reiter.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. Pl. *Tim.* 32c.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Pl. *Tim.* 42e.

ὅμοιον-ὁμοίω-principle of the Presocratic philosophy,<sup>72</sup> Philo does not refer to Anaxagoras' influence literally. The quotation is introduced in the new context by the phrase κατὰ γὰρ τὸν τραγικὸν, which in the Imperial period seems to refer to Euripides<sup>73</sup> as Homer was designated as ὁ ποιητής, Demosthenes as ὁ ῥήτωρ, and Plato as ὁ φιλόσοφος. In the context of the three subsequent instances where verses 12–14 are cited by Philo, they similarly serve as proof of Anaxagoras's theory of distinction (διάκρισις), but with no direct reference to him. In *De aetern. mundi* (27), 144<sup>74</sup> the phrase with which the verses are introduced in Philo's text is κατὰ τὸ φιλοσοφηθὲν ὑπὸ τοῦ τραγικοῦ and in *De aetern. mundi* (2), 5<sup>75</sup> καὶ ὁ τραγικός, whereas in *Leg. Alleg. Lib. I* (3.), 7<sup>76</sup> the formula is τὸ λεγόμενον. Furthermore, although Plutarch<sup>77</sup> refers to Euripides, he does not seem to have a direct knowledge of the play. He focuses on the origin and mortality of the beings. Introduced by the sentence ὡς Ἀναξαγόρας καὶ Εὐριπίδης, verses 12–14 are cited as a *pro*-argument to support the Epicurean philosophy according to which all living things are created by changing forms among each other (ἐκ μεταβολῆς τῆς ἀλλήλων). Plutarch and Galen probably derive from an intermediate source (Doxographer Aëtius)<sup>78</sup>, with the latter introducing vv. 12–14 in his prosaic *paraphrasis*<sup>79</sup> by the formula ὡς Ἀναξαγόρας καὶ Εὐριπίδης.

Clement is the only writer that mentions both the work and its author by name and cites Euripides independently of Plutarch and Galen, since he holds that these verses originate from a passage by Empedocles. He employs the fragment in order to support his view of plagiarism among Greek authors (*Str.* 6, 2, 4.3), and uses the term “μεταγράφει” with regard to Euripides transcribing Empedocles.<sup>80</sup> Nonetheless, he does not concern himself with a thorough interpretation of the fragment. The long history of the quotations' transmission through numerous Hellenistic and Imperial authors and the connection of these verses with a scientific context are simply disregarded. The great significance of the fact that a song of tragedy, probably due to Sophistic teaching, was used to convey an influential scientific theory and disseminate it among a broader audi-

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Müller 1965, 2 f., 9–11 (Heraclitus), 17f., 20f. (Parmenides), 27, 30–34, 43f. 51, 54–56, 59, 65–69 (Anaxagoras), 76–84, 90–103 (Atomists), 104 (Diogenes of Apollonia), 108, 127f., 138–140 (Hippocratic writings), and 167–173 (Sophistic), esp. 168–171.

<sup>73</sup> Klimek-Winter 1993, 125 f.

<sup>74</sup> VI 117 Cohn-Reiter.

<sup>75</sup> VI, 74 Cohn-Reiter.

<sup>76</sup> I 63 Cohn.

<sup>77</sup> Plut. *Plac. Philos.* lib. 5, 19, 908D.

<sup>78</sup> Doxographi Graeci, (H. Diels), Berlin 1879; Di Gregorio 1980, 75 f.

<sup>79</sup> Περὶ φύλοσ. ἱστορ. C. 35 XIX, 334 f. Kühn.

<sup>80</sup> Καθαρμοὶ F 117, VS I (H. Diels), 1934<sup>5</sup>, 358 f.

ence by associating it with a popular dualistic belief in the division between body/earth and soul/Ether has no impact on Clement. In this case the emphasis is not laid on the content of the citation but rather on its function as a single piece of evidence. In this chapter of the *Stromateis*, Clement passes over the literal meaning and the reception history of these verses in a way that precisely serves his own purposes.

### 3. Conclusion

Unlike most authors of the Second Sophistic, Clement does not wish to tie himself to the Hellenistic tradition,<sup>81</sup> but rather seeks to link the Greek classical past to the Christian doctrine that he considers to be older and superior. Furthermore, he tries to show that Greek poetry is the “other” aspect of Greek philosophy. His reception of Euripides is not a passive selection that leaves the “borrowed” text unchanged, but is instead an active adaptation: he creates something new by changing the traditional interpretation of Euripides’ works. By providing a re-reading of Euripides, Clement’s poetic quotations actually suggest philosophical or doctrinal arguments. Correspondingly, contrary to scholarly perspectives that view the cited author as the only literary authority, this brief study demonstrates quite the opposite: Clement as the quoting author prevails and proves himself to be a “legitimate forger” who acts not only as a “genuine” Christian thinker but also as a persuasive “teacher.”<sup>82</sup>

### References

- Arighetti, G. (1964), *Satiro, Vita di Euripide*, SCO 13. Pisa: Libreria Goliadica.
- Armstrong, A. H. (1967) (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cataudella, Q. (1939), “Intorno al frammento di Euripide 911 N<sup>2</sup> e all’ *Archelao*,” *A&R*, Serie III 7: 41–45.
- Chadwick, Henry. (1967), “Clement of Alexandria,” ed. A. H. Armstrong, *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 168–181.
- (1966), *Early Christian Thought and the Classical Tradition: Studies in Justin, Clement and Origen*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 31–65.

<sup>81</sup> Fowler 2010, 113–114.

<sup>82</sup> On Clement’s conception of the Church as a school for sinners (*didaskaleion*) in *Pd.* 3, 98 see Chadwick 1966, 63.

- Di Gregorio, L. (1980), "Lettura diretta e utilizzazione di Fonti intermedie nelle citazioni Plutarchee dei tre grandi tragici II, Euripide," *Aevum* 54.1: 46–79.
- Dillon, John. (1990), "Image, Symbol and Analogy: Three Basic Concepts of Neoplatonic Allegorical Exegesis," in ed. R. Baine Harris, *The Golden Chain: Studies in the Development of Platonism and Christianity*. Norfolk: Ashgate Variorum, 247–262.
- Drobner, Hubertus R., (2008), "Christian Philosophy," in eds. S. A. Hurvey and D. G. Hunter, *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 672–690.
- Edwards, Mark. (2008), "Apologetics," in eds. S. A. Hurvey and D. G. Hunter, *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 549–564.
- Ferguson, John. (1970), *The Religions of the Roman Empire*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- Fowler, Ryan. (2010), "The Second Sophistic," in ed. L. P. Gerson, *The Cambridge History of philosophy in Late Antiquity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1.100–114.
- Gerson Lloyd, P. (2010), *The Cambridge History of Philosophy in Late Antiquity*, Vol. I. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Harvey, Susan Ashbrook and David G. Hunter. (2008) (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hatch, Edwin and A. M. Fairbairn. (1891), *The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church*. New York: Williams and Norgate.
- Hunt, A. S. (1912), "Satyrus, Life of Euripides, ed. with Translations and Notes," *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri* 9, No. 1176, 124–182.
- Jouan, F. and H. Van Looy, (1998), *Euripides*, VIII. Paris: Les Belles Lettres.
- Kannicht, Richard. (2004), *TrGF*, Vol. 5.1 *Euripides Pars Prior*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck Ruprecht.
- (2004), *TrGF*, Vol. 5.2 *Euripides Pars Posterior*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck Ruprecht.
- Kambitsis, Jean. (1972), *L'Antiope d' Euripides, éditions commentée des fragments*. Athènes: Hourzamanis.
- Karanasiou, Argyri. (2002), *Die Rezeption der lyrischen Partien der attischen Tragödie in der griechischen Literatur—von der ausgehenden klassischen Periode bis zur Spätantike, Palingenesia* 78. Stuttgart: Steiner.
- (2016), "Transcriptio–Fälschung in minimaler Textform am Beispiel von Plutarchs Euripideszitaten," in eds. Wolfgang Kofler and Anna Novokhatko, *Pontes VII–Verleugnete Rezeption, Fälschungen antiker Texte, Paradeigmata*. Freiburg: Rombach Verlag, forthcoming.
- Kidd, I. G. (1988), *Posidonius II The Commentary, (i) Testimonia and Fragments 1–149*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Klimek-Winter, R. (1993), *Andromeda-Tragödien, Sophokles, Euripides, Livius Andronikos, Ennius, Accius, Text, Einleitung und Kommentar*, (BzA 21). Stuttgart: Teubner.
- König, J. (2010), "Conversational and citational Brevity in Plutarch's Sympotic Questions," in eds. M. Horster and Chr. Reitz, *Condensing Texts–Condensed Texts*. Stuttgart: Steiner, 321–348.
- Le Boulluec, Alain and Pierre Voulet. (1981), *Clément D'Alexandrie, Les Stromates V, Tome I, Introduction, Texte critique et Index, Traduction de Pierre Voulet*. Paris: Éd. du Cerf.
- Le Boulluec, Alain. (1981), *Clément D'Alexandrie, Les Stromates V, Tome II, Commentaire Bibliographie et Index*. Paris : Éd. du Cerf.
- Mansfeld, J. (1992), "Physikai Doxai and Problemata Physika from Aristotle to Aëtius (and Beyond)," in ed. W. W. Fortenbaugh and D. Gutas, *Theophrastus, His Psychological, Doxographical and Scientific Writings*. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publ.

- Marcovich, M. (1995), *Clementis Alexandrini Protrepticus*. Leiden, New York, and Köln: E. J. Brill.
- Müller, Carl W. (1965), *Gleiches zu Gleichem, Ein Prinzip frühgriechischen Denkens*, *Klassisch-Philologische Studien* 31, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- (1984), *Zur Datierung des sophokleischen Ödipus*, *Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur Mainz, Abh. Der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse*, Nr. 5. Wiesbaden: Steiner.
- Osborne, Catherine. (2010), "Clement of Alexandria," in: ed. L. P. Gerson, *The Cambridge History of philosophy in Late Antiquity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1.270–282.
- Osborn, Eric. (1987), *Anfänge christlichen Denkens, Justin, Irenäus, Tertullian, Klemens*, übers. bearb. und hrsg. von J. Bernard, Patmos: Düsseldorf.
- (2005), *Clement of Alexandria*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Rankin, David Ivan. (2006), *From Clement to Origen: The Social and Historical Context of the Church Fathers*. Hampshire, UK and Burlington, USA: Ashgate Publishing.
- Stählin, Otto. (1936), *Clemens Alexandrinus, Vol. I, Protrepticus und Paedagogus*. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung.
- Stählin, Otto and Ursula Treu. (1980), *Clemens Alexandrinus Vol. IV, Register, Erster Teil*. ZitateRegister, Berlin: Akademie Verlag.
- Stählin, Otto and Ludwig Früchtel and Ursula Treu. (1985), *Clemens Alexandrinus, Vol. II, Stromata I–VI*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag.
- Stead, Christopher. (1994), *Philosophy in Christian Antiquity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tanner, K. (1997), *Theories of Culture, A New Agenda for Theology*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress.
- Tripolitis, Antonia. (1985), *Origen, A critical Reading*. New York, Bern, and Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang.
- (2002), *Religions of the Hellenistic-Roman Age*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
- van Winden, J. C. M. (1981), "Das Christentum und die Philosophie, Der Beginn des Dialogs zwischen dem Glauben und dem Verstand," in ed. C. Zintzen, *Der Mittelplatonismus*, 397–412.
- Waszink, Jan Hendrik. (1981), "Einfluß des Platonismus im frühen Christentum," in ed. C. Zintzen, *Der Mittelplatonismus*, 413–448.
- Webster, T. B. L. (1967), *The Tragedies of Euripides*. London: Methuen.
- Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, Ulrich von. (1935), "21. Melanippe," in: *id.*, *Kleine Schriften*, Berlin: Weidmann, 1935–1972.
- Zintzen, Clemens. (1981), *Der Mittelplatonismus*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.

# Heretic Falsification in Cyprian's *Epistulae*?

MARKUS MÜLKE\*  
Augustana-Hochschule

In his short treatise *De adulteratione librorum Origenis* (397 AD), Rufinus of Aquileia aims to prove that the writings of Origen were falsified by heretics. He supports his argument through a comparative analysis of other renowned authors of early Christian literature and claims that similar *adulterationes* had taken place (e.g., Clemens Alexandrinus [chapter 4], Dionysius Alexandrinus [5], and Hilarius Pictaviensis [11]). Then, as an example of more recent times, Cyprian, the famous bishop of Carthage († 258 AD), is introduced (adult. 12 [CCL 20.15]). His case, however, is different. According to Rufinus, not only were several single passages in his works interpolated, but some heretics (*haeretici quidam*) in Constantinople had inserted (*inserentes*) Tertullian's complete *De trinitate*, a dogmatically reprehensible work,<sup>1</sup> into the widespread corpus of Cyprian's letters,<sup>2</sup> which normally were published in one comprehensive codex. In addition, in concerted actions these heretics produced as many as possible copies of those falsified exemplars and infiltrated them—at a ridiculous price (*pretio viliori*)—into the book trade of the big city, in order to get lots of people to buy them (*ut exiguitate pretii homines inlecti ignotos et latentes dolos facilius conpararent*).<sup>3</sup> Rufinus supplies the heretics' motivation: Cyprian's teachings on

---

\* I thank Prof. Dr. Edmund Cueva (Houston) for corrections on the English Version of this paper.

<sup>1</sup> This *libellus* is called by Rufinus *reprehensibiliter—quantum ad veritatem fidei nostrae pertinet—scriptus*; about the dogmatic problems of *De trinitate* cf. Loi 1975, 31 with note 93; 36–37.

<sup>2</sup> According to von Soden (1904, 175–176), the word *epistularum* embraces the *tractatus* as well, i.e. the corpus as a more complete edition of Cyprian's writings. Rufinus' words, however, do not easily support this interpretation. Novatian's works, on the other hand, were sometimes called *epistulae* because of their literary form (cf. Hier. *epist.* 10, 3 below in note 15).

<sup>3</sup> The argument, that during the work of the copyists or in the shops of book traders Christian books were manipulated by heretics, can be found elsewhere (cf. Marksches 2006, 97–98). Centuries later, Anastasios Sinaites in his work Ὁδηγός (CCG 8.188; around 700

the Trinity, particularly on the Holy Spirit, should be falsified in order to make their own heresy more trustworthy under the cloak of his authority (*quo per hoc invenirent haeretici perfidiae suae fidem tanti viri auctoritate conquirere*). The resolute opposition of some orthodox *fratres* detected the crime, but it was not easy to lead back to the true faith those readers influenced by the falsified editions (*quamplurimis tamen in illis partibus sanctum martyrem Cyprianum huius fidei, quae a Tertulliano non recte scripta est, fuisse persuasum est*).

Apart from his erroneous attribution of *De trinitate* to Tertullian—its author is in fact Novatian, Cyprian's North African contemporary—modern research considers Rufinus' description of these events correct and makes use of it especially for the textual history of Novatian's opus *De trinitate*, rarely for that of Cyprian's *epistulae*: "Überliefert auch unter dem Namen Tertullians, wurde das Buch von Gruppen (z.B. von den Makedonianern) Cyprian zugewiesen, die es—dessen rechtgläubige Autorität beanspruchend—um 400 besonders in Konstantinopel verbreiteten."<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, it has been known since the fourth century AD that the collection of Cyprian's letters had been expanded—as evidenced not only by *testimonia* and the *Vita Pontii*, but also by several pseudepigrapha,<sup>5</sup> among these two other writings of Novatian (*epist.* 30 and 36).<sup>6</sup> The textual volume of Cyprian's letter collection, therefore, fluctuated, for which reason it does not seem impossible that heretics manipulated it in the way Rufinus describes.<sup>7</sup>

---

AD) talks about a certain workshop in Alexandria where the Monophysites falsified writings of the church fathers, particularly those of Cyril, at the instigation of the imperial prefect Severianus (cf. Gastgeber 2001, 25).

<sup>4</sup> Gülzow 1997, 523. Cf. Cavallera 1922, 2:100; Junod 1997, 241; Veronese 1999, 48<sup>25</sup>; Amacker 2002, Junod 2002a, 312<sup>1</sup>, 313<sup>2</sup>; 2002b, 28–29. 31, and Röwekamp 2005, 207: "Auch andere der angeführten Beispiele (Erweiterung der *Recognitiones*, marcionitische Bibelbearbeitung, Briefcorpus des Cyprian) beruhen auf Tatsachen." Röwekamp admits, however, that Rufinus indeed "falsche Angaben macht," for example the false attribution of the book to Tertullian or the fact that he "eine wohl unhistorische Legende erzählt (Hilarius)."

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Bayard XLVI–XLVIII and Schmidt 1997a, 537.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Koch 1936, 1146; Weyer 1962, 1962, 7 and n. 11, 11<sup>31</sup>; Diercks 1972, V; Loi 1975, 9; and Schmidt 1997c, 576.

<sup>7</sup> According to Augustin, too, Cyprian's writings had probably undergone heretical falsifications. His argument is interesting. In contrast to the biblical scriptures, which were protected through many translations and their continuous use in the church, but nonetheless exposed to forgers' manipulations, one must expect that the work of a single author, even of a famous bishop, has been at high risk (*epist.* 93, 38 [CSEL 34.482–483]).



The whole passage, however, is called into question<sup>8</sup> by Hieronymus who, in his *Apologia adversus Rufinum* (401 AD), subjects to severe, polemical examination all the arguments Rufinus had advanced in order to prove the heretical falsification of Origen's works.<sup>9</sup> After having criticized the various chapters on the other early Christian authors, he comes to speak of Cyprian and writes (*apol. adv. Rufin.* 2.19 [CCL 79.56]):

transit [sc. Rufinus] ad inclytum martyrem Cyprianum et dicit Tertulliani librum, cui titulus est: De trinitate, sub nomine eius Constantinopoli a macedonianae partis haereticis lectitari. in quo crimine mentitur duo, nam nec Tertulliani liber est, nec Cypriani dicitur, sed Novatiani, cuius et inscribitur titulo, et auctoris eloquium stili proprietate demonstrat.

Hieronymus here pretends to cite Rufinus verbally (*dicit*), but the following quotation does not correspond exactly to what had been said about Cyprian in *De adulteratione*.<sup>10</sup> Although Rufinus had specifically pointed to the falsification of the letter collection, Hieronymus does not mention it at all,<sup>11</sup> but instead gives the impression that what is to be noted is the authorship of *De trinitate* and that Rufinus only had lamented that the heretics attributed this allegedly Tertullianian writing to Cyprian.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, the word *lectitari* renders the long passage that Rufinus dedicated to the heretics' efforts in Constantinople inadequate and misleading—after this word the following *crimen* sounds somewhat ironic.

<sup>8</sup> Loi's (1975, 12) opinion that Hieronymus "ironizza sulla notizia data da Rufino" is not satisfying.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. the critical remarks in Marrou 1949, 216–217 and Veronese 1999, 33.

<sup>10</sup> The fact that Hieronymus explicitly identifies the pretended heretics—the *Macedoniani*—and therefore offers some more information which Rufinus had not given, cannot be used as a strong argument against Rufinus. His words *haeretici quidam, qui in spiritum sanctum blasphemant* are to be interpreted as a typical ancient introduction to quotation (with *quidam*), nonetheless it is a clear reference to the Pneumatomachoi, the *Macedoniani*.

<sup>11</sup> Even modern studies often are not precise in referring to Rufinus' text; cf. e.g. Bardenhewer 1912, 633 and Weyer 1962, 12 about the information "von den Makedonienern werde das Buch in Konstantinopel unter dem Namen Cyprians verbreitet"; Speyer 1971, 265; and Loi 1975, 12: "Rufino di Aquileia ... ci informa che i macedoniani di Costantinopoli avevano diffuso sotto il nome di Cipriano un opuscolo contenente vari errori trinitari, opuscolo che Rufino personalmente identifica con un *De trinitate* di Tertulliano."

<sup>12</sup> Cf. *apol. adv. Rufin.* 2.21 (CCL 79.57): ... *post Cypriani ψευδεπίγραφον haereseos librum* ... and Lardet 202.

By shifting the argument to the question of the authorship of *De trinitate*,<sup>13</sup> Hieronymus prepares the following *refutatio* of Rufinus: the heretics who, according to Rufinus, had “read” the book under a false author’s name were not liars, but Rufinus himself in two respects (*mentitur duo*). First, Rufinus had assumed that *De trinitate* had been written by Tertullian and inserted into the corpus by the heretics; second, the fact that he stressed that it was called one of Cyprian’s works. In truth—Hieronymus continues—the book was titled with Novatian’s name,<sup>14</sup> and the attribution to this author was indeed correct as the close examination of its language and style proved. The strategy by which Hieronymus determines the shakiness of Rufinus’ arguments here becomes evident: if Rufinus’ own incapacity in identifying correctly the work *De trinitate* were proved, then it would be even unnecessary to discuss his *ineptiae*, his *fabula* about the falsified corpus of Cyprian’s *epistulae*.

Generally, modern research has called into question the premise of the first reproach because some years before Hieronymus himself had connected Novatian’s *De trinitate* with Tertullian in a prominent work (*vir. ill.* 70 [ed. Ceresa-Gastaldo, 176, 178]): *scripsit* [sc. Novatianus] ... “*De trinitate*” *grande volumen, quasi ἐπιτομὴν operis Tertulliani faciens, quod plurimi nescientes Cypriani aestimant*.<sup>15</sup> In addition, the fact that the work had been handed down in the manuscripts of Tertullian’s writings seems to corroborate Rufinus’ position. This *communis opinio*, however, is problematic: whoever knows the background of the whole story gets exactly the opposite impression—it seems impossible that a writing Hieronymus had attributed to Novatian four years previously (AD 393) in his own well-known catalogue of authors, *De viris illustribus*, and had

<sup>13</sup> During the fourth century, the attribution of this writing was indeed controversial, cf. Bardy 1936, 285<sup>4</sup>; Weyer 1962, 11–12, 15; Loi 1975, 12; and Gülzow 1997, 523. It had been handed down in the manuscripts of Tertullian, probably because some books of both authors bore similar titles (cf. von Soden 1904, 176; Bardenhewer 1912, 630–631, 634; Koch 1936, 1146; Weyer 1962, 11–12, 15; Speyer 1971, 265; Diercks 1972, 2–7; Loi 1975, 9, 15; and Gülzow 523). Hieronymus closely connects both authors also in *epist.* 36.1.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Weyer 1962, 12<sup>34</sup> and Loi 1975, 12: this reference to the title of *De trinitate* can not be sustained by the manuscripts.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Weyer 1962, 11–12; Loi 1975, 9, 12; Lardet 1993, 202; and Veronese 1999, 48. In fact, in his *De trinitate* Novatian seems to be influenced strongly by Tertullian—in language and content, cf. Loi 1975, 9–10; Lardet 1993, 202; Tränkle 1997, 507; Schmidt 1999, 455; and Röwekamp 2005, 417<sup>242</sup>. About the difficult identification of his sources in the writings of Tertullian (*Adversus Praxean?*) cf. however Bardenhewer 1912, 630–631; and Diercks 1972, 7: “ces paroles n’ont pas encore été expliquées adéquatement.” Hieronymus had already written in *epist.* 10.3 (CSEL 54, 37–38): ...*epistulas Novatiani, ut, dum scismatici hominis venena cognoscimus, libentius sancti martyris Cypriani bibamus antidotum*.

explicitly denied (cf. *nescientes!*) as Cyprian's would be always mistakenly identified! Further, by stressing the fact that the editions of *De trinitate* displayed Novatian's name in their titles, Hieronymus strengthens the impression that Rufinus neither had any personal knowledge of the book nor was well acquainted with the debate about its authenticity.

But what about the second objection that fundamentally contradicts the story of Cyprian's falsified corpus? It means that the heretics would not have been even able to attribute falsely *De trinitate* to the *inclytus martyr Cyprianus*, but only to use it for their own purposes under the name of the true author Novatian—because Novatian's stylistic individuality made it impossible to insert one of his own writings into the corpus of Cyprian. With the words *nec Cypriani dicitur*, which do not refer only to the pretended heretics, but to the general public, Hieronymus especially undermines Rufinus' assumption that the heretics, unrecognized and secretly (cf. *ignotos et latentes dolos*), had made an enormous success by publishing their falsified edition of Cyprian's letters in Constantinople. Indeed even Rufinus' description that "certain" catholic *fratres* had detected and resisted their plot remained quite vague, too.

Rufinus turns out to be unreliable in another detail as well: in which language would the *Macedoniani* have published such an edition of Cyprian? The story that their falsified edition was intended for the general book trade in Constantinople, i.e. for the common public, is credible only if it had been published in Greek—no little effort since in that case it would have necessitated the translation of the inserted *De trinitate*! Such a translation would not have been absolutely impossible: at the end of the fourth century in the Greek speaking east of the imperium the writings of the Carthaginian martyr were quite well known and he had become famous through Gregory of Nazianus (*orat.* 24).<sup>16</sup> But Rufinus himself contradicts such a hypothesis with his own argumentation in *De adulteratione librorum Origenis*: he explicitly ends his explanations on the falsifica-

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Schmidt 1997b, 574; also Dekkers 1953, 197–199; Speyer 1971, 265; Fisher 1982, 209–210 (ambivalent); and Lardet 1993, 202 (ambivalent); *contra* von Soden 1904, 181: "Das nach Rufin in Konstantinopel verbreitete Corpus war sicher lateinisch, welche Sprache man in Konstantinopel aus bekannten geschichtlichen Gründen beherrschte" and Delehaye 1921, 327–329, 331 who thinks that the corpus circulated in Constantinople in the Latin language and that Gregory used the falsified edition Rufinus is talking about, but himself considering *De trinitate* as one of Cyprian's dogmatic writings (cf. *orat.* 24, 13 and Veronese 1999, 48). It cannot be discussed at length here if Augustin in his *Sermo* 310 hints at translations of Cyprian's works into foreign languages (PL 38, 1413–1414): *verum quia non solum dixit quae audirentur, sed scripsit etiam quae legerentur, et ad alia loca per alias linguas, ad alia vero per suas litteras venit, et innotuit regionibus multis.*

tions of Greek authors with chapter 9, but in chapter 10 follows, at some length, the transition to more recent examples from Latin literature:

non pigebit etiam Latinis scriptoribus talia quaedam accidisse monstrare, et calumnias immensas ex adulteratione librorum suorum sanctis et probatissimis viris commotas. et ne quid perfectae credulitati desit, res adhuc quae sunt memoriae nostrae retexam, quo testimonii veritas neminem lateat [!].

An example from the *Latini scriptores* would hardly be possible if in what follows were discussed a falsified Greek translation of Cyprian. Moreover, Rufinus himself does not touch the question of language at all. On the other hand, Hieronymus' hint about Novatian's individual style points at the improbability of the translation into Greek—the hint only makes sense if it refers to the Latin original of the true author.

Consequently, it seems doubtful that Rufinus in chapter 12 of his *De adulteratione librorum Origenis* is a reliable witness to the textual history of Cyprian's *epistulae*—a fact that future research on the whole corpus needs to keep in mind.

### References

- Amacker, René and Éric Junod. (2002a) (eds.), *Pamphile et Eusèbe de Césarée, Apologie pour Origène, suivi de Rufin d'Aquilée, Sur la falsification des livres d'Origène*, tome 1: Texte critique, traduction et notes. Paris: Editions du Cerf ("Les Belles Lettres") = SC 464.
- Amacker, René and Éric Junod. (2002b) (eds.), *Pamphile et Eusèbe de Césarée, Apologie pour Origène, suivi de Rufin d'Aquilée, Sur la falsification des livres d'Origène*, tome 2: Étude, commentaire philologique et index. Paris: Editions du Cerf ("Les Belles Lettres") = SC 465.
- Bardenhewer, Otto. (1912), *Geschichte der altkirchlichen Literatur*, 3. Band: *Das vierte Jahrhundert mit Ausschluss der Schriftsteller syrischer Zunge*. Freiburg: Herder.
- Bardy, Gustave. (1936), "Faux et fraudes littéraires dans l'antiquité chrétienne 2," *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 32: 275–302.
- Bayard, Le Chanoine. (1925) (ed.), *Saint Cyprien, Correspondance*. Paris: Societe d'Édition "Les Belles Lettres."
- Cavallera, Ferdinand. (1922), *Saint Jérôme. Sa vie et son oeuvre, première partie*, tome 1–2. Louvain, Paris: Bureaux du *Spicilegium sacrum Lovaniense = Spicilegium sacrum Lovaniense. Études et documents* 1–2.
- Dekkers, Eligius. (1953), "Les traductions grecques des écrits patristiques latins," *Sacris Erudiri* 5: 193–233.
- Delehaye, Hippolytus. (1921), "Cyprien d'Antioche et Cyprien de Carthage," *Analecta Bollandiana* 39: 314–332.

- Diercks, Gerhard Frederick. (1972) (ed.), *Novatiani opera quae supersunt*. Turnholt: Brepols = CCL 4.
- Fisher, Elizabeth A. (1982), "Greek translations of Latin literature in the fourth century A.D.," *Yale Classical Studies* 27: 173–215.
- Gastgeber, Christian. (2001), "Fälschungen im griechischen Kulturraum. Versuch eines Überblicks" in Christian Gastgeber (ed.), *Kopie und Fälschung. Katalog zur Ausstellung*. Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 11–41.
- Gülzow, Henneke. (1997), "§ 476 Novatianus," Sallmann, 519–528.
- Junod, Eric. (1997), "Un traité méconnu sur les faux littéraires dans l'antiquité chrétienne: *Sur la falsification des ouvrages d'Origène de Rufin d'Aquilée*," *Études théologiques et religieuses* 72: 235–241.
- Koch, Hugo. (1936), "Novatianus," *RE* 17.1: 1138–1156.
- Lardet, Pierre. (1993), *L'apologie de Jérôme contre Rufin. Un commentaire*. Leiden, New York, and Köln: Brill = *Vigiliae Christianae* Supplementband 15.
- Loi, Vincenzo. (1975) (ed.), *Novatiani De trinitate liber*. Torino: Società Editrice Internazionale = *Corona Patrum* 2.
- Markschies, Christoph (2006), *Das antike Christentum. Frömmigkeit, Lebensformen, Institutionen*. München: C. H. Beck.
- Marrou, Henri Irenee. (1949), "La technique de l'édition à l'époque patristique," *Vigiliae Christianae* 3: 208–224.
- Röwekamp, Georg, (2005) (ed.), *Pamphilus von Caesarea, Apologia pro Origene. Apologie für Origenes*, übersetzt und eingeleitet, Turnhout: Beck = *Fontes Christiani* 80.
- Sallmann, Klaus. (1997) (ed.), *Die Literatur des Umbruchs. Von der römischen zur christlichen Literatur 117 bis 284 n. Chr.* München: C. H. Beck = *Handbuch der lateinischen Literatur der Antike* = *Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft* 8.4.
- Schmidt, Peter Lebrecht. (1997a), "§ 478 Caecilius Cyprianus (*qui et Thascius*). B. Überlieferungsgeschichte," Sallmann, 535–540.
- Schmidt, Peter Lebrecht. (1997b), "§ 478 Caecilius Cyprianus (*qui et Thascius*). E. Rezeption," Sallmann, 574–575.
- Schmidt, Peter Lebrecht. (1997c), "§ 479.1 Korrespondenten Cyprians," Sallmann, 576.
- Schmidt, Christiane. (1999), "Novatian," *Lexikon der antiken christlichen Literatur*<sup>2</sup>, Freiburg: Herder, 455–456.
- Speyer, Wolfgang. (1971), *Die literarische Fälschung im heidnischen und christlichen Altertum. Ein Versuch ihrer Deutung*. München: C. H. Beck = *Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft* 1.2.
- Tränkle, Hermann. (1997), "§ 474 Q. Septimius Florens Tertullianus," Sallmann, 438–511.
- Veronese, Maria. (1999), "Introduzione, Traduzione e Note." *Rufino di Concordia, Scritti apologetici*, Nuova edizione riveduta e corretta a cura di Manlio Simonetti, Aquileia: Città Nuova = *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiae Aquileiensis* 5, 1, 31–53.
- von Soden, Hans. (1904), *Die cyprianische Briefsammlung–Geschichte ihrer Entstehung und Überlieferung*. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs.
- Weyer, Hans. (1962) (ed.), *Novatianus, De trinitate. Über den dreifaltigen Gott, Text und Übersetzung mit Einleitung und Kommentar*. Düsseldorf: Patmos = *Testimonia* 2.



## Contributors

ANNE-CATHERINE BAUDOIN is an Assistant Professor in Greek Language and Literature at the École normale supérieure de la rue d'Ulm in Paris. Her work focuses mainly on early Christian literature – New Testament, Apocrypha and Patristic writings. She is investigating the history of transmission of Christian works and traditions in the languages of ancient East and West. She is currently preparing a book on Pontius Pilate in first millennium literature and works collaboratively with an international team on the multilingual edition of the widely-disseminated apocryphal *Acts of Pilate* (or *Gospel of Nicodemus*).

REYES BERTOLÍN CEBRIÁN is an associate professor at the Department of Classics and Religion at the University of Calgary, Canada, where she started her academic career in 1996. Her interests include Homeric epic and Greek sport. She has published considerably in both of these areas. Currently, she is writing a book on ancient Greek athletes.

SCOTT G. BROWN is an independent scholar from Toronto who wrote his doctoral dissertation on the *Letter to Theodore* ascribed to Clement of Alexandria and its two quotations from a mystical Gospel of Mark. He has since published a book (*Mark's Other Gospel*) and fifteen papers on this subject. His areas of research include the literary interrelationships among the gospels, Bethany beyond the Jordan, ritual impurity, narrative criticism, Markan literary techniques, Philo of Alexandria, early Christian mysticism, and questioned document examination. He is also the author of *A Guide to Writing Academic Essays in Religious Studies* (London: Continuum, 2008).

EDMUND P. CUEVA is Professor of Classics and Humanities at the University of Houston-Downtown, where he currently serves as chair of the Arts and Humanities Department. His research and teaching interests focus on the ancient novel, mythology, and ancient literature and the occult.

BRIAN R. DOAK is Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies and Faculty Fellow in the William Penn Honors Program at George Fox University. He is the author

or editor of five books and numerous articles, including *Consider Leviathan: Narratives of Nature and the Self in Job* (Fortress, 2014), *The Last of the Rephaim: Conquest and Cataclysm in the Heroic Ages of Ancient Israel* (Ilex Foundation/Harvard University Press, 2012), and recent comparative essays on the intersection of Greek heroic motifs and the Hebrew Bible in *Harvard Theological Review* and the *Journal of Biblical Literature*.

KRISTI EASTIN is Associate Professor of Classics and Humanities at California State University, Fresno. She has worked extensively on the illustrative tradition of Virgil's poetry: "The Aeneas of Vergil: A Dramatic Performance Presented in the Original Latin by John Ogilby," and a forthcoming article on the illustrations in the 1502 Virgil edited by Sebastian Brant. She is currently working on a complete study of illustrations of Virgil's *Georgics* from antiquity to the present.

JAKUB FILONIK is an Independent Scholar who recently defended his thesis on the rhetoric of freedom in Athenian oratory in the Department of Classical Studies at the University of Warsaw (2015). He has published on Athenian impiety trials; ancient roots of early modern political thought; political discourse in Athenian oratory and tragedy. He is currently completing a book based on his doctoral dissertation; a Polish translation of selected Athenian orators; and several papers focused around political thought in Athenian oratory and conceptual metaphors in Greek political discourse.

ARGYRI KARANASIOU is a Lecturer in Greek and Latin Literature at the Saarland University, Germany. In her doctoral thesis (*Palingenesia* 78, 2002/03) she explored the reception of lyric passages from Attic tragedy by post-classical and greco-roman prose authors. At the Mainz-Academy-project "ILLR" (Indices der lateinischen Literatur der Renaissance) 2003/04 she contributed to the edition of the Platonist Marsilio Ficino. She is currently writing a book on Plautine Comedy which will focus on the figure of the "slave" as an authorial narrator. Her publications range from Greek Tragedy and its reception, Greek and Roman Comedy to Platonic works.

MIKEL LABIANO is Professor of Greek at the Universitat de València, Spain. He is the author of *Estudio de las interjecciones en las Comedias de Aristófanes* (Amsterdam: Hakkert 2000). His main areas of interest are Greek Drama, mainly Euripidean Tragedy and Aristophanic Comedy, and the *Corpus Hippocraticum*. He is currently investigating the conversational level of Aristophanic language in diachronic perspective.



KLAUS LENNARTZ is professor of Greek, Latin and Mediaeval Latin philology, teaching as a lecturer in all three fields at the University of Hamburg. He is the author of *Non verba sed vim. Kritisch-exegetische Untersuchungen zu den Fragmenten der archaischen römischen Tragödie* (1994) and *Iambos. Philologische Untersuchungen zur Geschichte einer Gattung in der Antike* (2010), and has published various articles on Plato, Menander, Plautus, Sallustius, Theodulus, and others. His main interest currently is a translation of some *Poetae Latini Aevi Carolini* in German verses with a philological commentary.

JAVIER MARTÍNEZ studied Classical Philology at Complutense University (Madrid). He is Professor of Greek Philology at the University of Oviedo (Spain). He has translated and commented works of Plato and Aristophanes into Spanish and published numerous articles on Greek linguistics and the Greek literary tradition. He has edited several volumes on the subject of fakes, forgers and forgeries in Classical Literature: *Falsificaciones y falsarios de la Literatura Clásica* (Madrid 2011), *Mundus vult decipi* (Madrid 2012), *Fakes and Forgers of Classical Literature · Ergo decipiatur!* (Leiden/Boston 2014).

MICHAEL MECKLER is Permanent Fellow in the Center for Epigraphical and Palaeographical Studies at The Ohio State University. Meckler, who has been a visiting faculty member at the University of Michigan and at Yale, has written widely on historiography and the classical tradition from late antiquity to the present day, including in the book he edited on *Classical Antiquity and the Politics of America* (Baylor University Press, 2006). He is also a scholar of early Ireland and Scotland, and he is currently examining the historical assumptions underlying the development of modern dog breeds.

MARKUS MÜLKE is a lecturer and researcher in Classical Philology at the Augustana-Hochschule, the Theological Seminary of the Lutheran Church of Bavaria in Neuendettelsau (Germany). His research covers the Greek and Latin languages and literatures, with special interests in the Christian late antiquity and questions concerning the textual tradition and reception of classical books, in ancient as well as in medieval times. After his dissertation "Der Autor und sein Text. Die Verfälschung des Originals im Urteil antiker Autoren" (= Untersuchungen zur antiken Literatur und Geschichte 93, Berlin-New York 2008), he is preparing for publication a monograph study on the early Jewish philosopher and exegete Aristobulos of Alexandria.

LUIGI PEDRONI, ancient historian and classic archaeologist, has extensive international experience. I.W. Killam Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of British Columbia (Vancouver, Canada), and Forschungsprofessor at the University of Innsbruck (Austria), currently teaches as Visiting Professor at the Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences of Vilnius. He has published more than a hundred scholarly papers in major international journals about archaeology, numismatics, and ancient history. After having conducted excavations in Lazio, Campania, and in particular in Pompeii, he presently leads the Telesia Archaeological Project and is working on a historical commentary on John the Lydian's *De Mensibus*.

VALENTINA PROSPERI is Associate Professor of Classical Philology at the University of Sassari. She specializes in the early modern reception of classics: she has published extensively on the Renaissance reception of Lucretius. Her latest book (*Omero sconfitto. Ricerche sul mito di Troia dall'antichità al Rinascimento*, Roma 2013) concerns the Early modern diffusion of the Latin tradition on the Trojan War.

EMILIA RUIZ YAMUZA is Professor of Greek Philology at the University of Seville. She has been interested in Plato: in the study of platonic and sophistic myths, in the concept of myth held by the Neoplatonist, and in the textual transmission of the dialogue *Phaedrus*. She has published on Greek Rhetoric, mainly about problems of authorship related with works attributed to Hermogenes and with the sources of the *status* theory. In the last years she has published heavily on Greek Syntax from a functional-cognitive and discourse-based perspective. She is currently investigating the pragmatic and discourse role of Extra Clausal Elements.

ANDREW JAMES SILLETT is a lecturer in Classics at Brasenose College, University of Oxford. His primary research interest lies in the reception of Cicero in the culture of the early imperial period. He also studies political thought in the late Republic and early Empire.

GAIUS STERN teaches classroom archeology, Ancient History, and Classics at UC Berkeley and Berkley Extension. He is a major contributor to the *Encyclopedia of Conflict in Greece and Rome*. Much of his research focuses on the Age of Augustus, expanding upon his dissertation, a study of the Ara Pacis. His three main topics of recent research are the transition of the Roman Republic to Princi-

pate, Prisoners of War in the Ancient World, and the corruption of absolute monarchy (Macedon, Persia, Rome). He is currently working on trimming his 500 page dissertation on the Ara Pacis into a book.

CRISTIAN TOLSA is Bader Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Classics at Queen's University (Kingston, Canada), where he teaches Ancient Science and pursues a research project on Claudius Ptolemy. His interests include the relationship between mathematics and the broader intellectual context in the Graeco-Roman world, including the self-definition of mathematicians and their philosophical stance.



# Indices

## *Index locorum\**

- Achilles Tatius  
1.10.4, 165  
2.24.4, 166  
2.25.1, 166
- Aelius Aristides  
*Panath.* 97, 291
- Aelius Theon  
*Prog.* 59.22, 122
- Anaphora Pilati*  
413 Tischendorf, 224  
413-420 Tischendorf, 228
- Appianus  
*BC* 3.1.2, 62
- Aristophanes  
*Eq.* 176-79, 146  
*fr.* 290 K.-A., 144  
*Lys.* 910-12, 147  
*Th.* 75-80, 147
- Athenaeus  
13.590d-591f, 132
- Augustinus  
*epist.* 93.38, 348
- Bible, NT*  
*John* 19.19-22, 219  
*Mark* 14.51-2, 8  
15.46-16.8, 309  
*Matthew* 8.5-9.8, 231
- Bible, OT*  
*Daniel* 7-12, 34  
*Genesis* 12-15, 42  
15, 31  
*Isaiah.* 40-55, 47  
1 *Kings* 8.46-53, 33  
13, 33
- Chariton  
2.10.3, 163  
5.6.7, 162  
5.7.1, 162
- Cicero  
*De Orat.* 1.90-3, 182  
*Q. Fr.* 3.6.4, 18789
- Clemens Alex.  
*Strom.* 1.1.13.4, 307  
3.6.45.1-3, 318  
4.26.172.1, 339  
5.9.58.1-6, 121  
5.11.70.2-6, 336  
6.2.24.4 ff., 341  
6.15.124.6-125.2, 307
- Commentariolum Petitionis*  
1, 186  
11-12, 184  
47, 186
- Dares  
*Pref.*, 103  
*Acta* 7, 106  
11, 106  
12, 98  
21, 94
- Dictys  
*Eph.* 1.9, 107  
1.13, 98  
1.32, 94
- Diogenes Laertius,  
2.12-14, 126
- Eunapius  
*VS* 6.11.8, 290
- Euripides  
*Cyc.* 672-75, 149

---

\* This index only offers a selection of the passages discussed.

- Eusebius  
*Hist. Eccl.* 2.2.6, 228  
 9.5.1, 226  
*HA Caracalla*  
 2.9-11, 208  
*HA Gallieni Duo*  
 19.4, 210  
*HA Quadrigae Tyrannorum*  
 1.1-2, 213
- Heliodorus  
 1.11.1, 168  
 1.26.6, 168  
 4.7.2, 167
- Herodotus  
 2.113-15, 101  
 3.67-73, 56  
 3.122.2, 99  
 6.61-70, 57  
 7.171.1, 99
- Hieronymus  
*apol. adv. Rufin.* 2.19, 349  
*Vir. Ill.* 1, 10  
 70, 350
- Homerus  
*Il.* 4.197, 77  
 9.520-602, 43  
*Od.* 3.203-4, 77  
 4.140, 86  
 4.221-230, 87  
 4.239, 88  
 4.259-60, 88  
 8.536-41, 79  
 8.579-80, 76
- Longus  
 2.19.2, 163  
 3.26.3, 164
- Lucianus  
*adv. Ind.* 20, 70  
*VH* 1.4, 100
- Lydus  
*Mens.* 4.138 W., 273
- Macrobius  
*Sat.* 3.12.7, 279
- Mormon  
 8.1-4, 16
- Ovidius  
*Met.* 1.525-47, 193
- Petronius  
*Sat.* 81.2, 199  
 111-12, 10
- Philo  
*Leg.* 303-305, 220
- Plato  
*Lg.* 972d, 120  
*Men.* 91d-e, 130  
*Prt.* 317b-c, 130  
 321e-322a, 115  
*Rep.* 415c1-416d2, 107
- Plutarchus  
*Nic.* 23.4, 129  
*Per.* 13.9-10, 128  
 32, 127  
 35, 136  
*QR* 54, 279
- Polybius  
 33.15-18, 59
- Proclus  
*In Platonis Rempubl Comm.* 2.53, 121  
*Platonic Theology* 5.87-90, 121
- Protagoras  
*Fr.* 1, 117  
 4, 117
- Ptolemaeus  
*Almagest* 10.4.11-14, 288
- Secret Mark*  
 1.12, 311
- Servius  
*Aen.* 2.166, 279  
 8.285, 280, 283
- Sibylline Oracles*  
 4.119-24, 68  
 4.130-39, 68
- Silius  
 4.329-30, 199
- Sophocles  
*Ph.* 1244-47, 148
- Strabo  
 17.1.28, 294
- Suetonius  
*Ner.* 57.2, 69  
*Tib.* 25, 63
- Tacitus  
*Ann.* 2.39-40, 63, 64  
*Dial.* 2-3, 212  
*Hist.* 2.8-9, 67

- Tertullianus  
*Apol.* 5.2, 227  
 21.24, 219
- Thucydides  
 2.28, 136  
 2.38.1, 118
- Varro  
*LL* 5.32, 277
- Vita Aristophanis* 59-61, 141
- Xenophon  
*Hell.* 3.3.1-4, 58
- Xenophon (Eph.)  
*Eph.* 1.5.7, 164

### General Index

- Achilles Tatius  
 instances of deception, 165
- Acta Pilati*, 223, 225
- Acts of the Apostles*, 228
- adynaton*, 199
- Agesilaus, 58
- αἰδώς, 118
- Akenson, D., 311
- Akkadian Prophecies  
 'Text A', 29  
*The Marduk Text*, 27  
*The Šulgi Text*, 29
- Alexander Balas, 59
- Alexander, M.C., 178
- Alexandria, 290  
 the Serapaeum, 296
- Alexandrian scholars, 143
- allegory, 119, 120, 122, 210, 291, 307,  
 308, 332, 337, 341
- allusion  
 anachronistic -, 313
- Anaphora Pilati*, 220  
 date of composition, 228, 231
- Anastasopoulou, V., 323, 324
- Anaxilas, 151
- ancient novel  
 and historiography, 100
- ancient scholars  
 use of sources, 135
- Anderson, B., 37, 38
- Anderson, W.S., 193
- Antiochus of Ascalon, 180
- antiquarianism  
 in 18th cent. Britain, 240  
 Joh. Lydus, 276
- Antonio Francesco Gori  
*Museum Florentium*, 244
- Apuleius  
*Metamorphoses*, 66
- Archippus, 142  
 'second Aristophanes', 143
- ars / artifex*  
 τέχνη / τεχνίτης, 186
- ars rhetorica*, 181
- Asheri, D., 99
- Aspasia  
 charge of 'impiety', 127
- Athenaeus, 144
- Auerbach, E., 37
- Austin, C., 148
- Bardenhewer, O., 349
- Barthes, R.  
 'reality effect', 207
- Beekes, R., 144
- Benjamin, W., 36, 37
- Bergk, T., 142
- Bernard de Montfaucon  
*L'antiquité expliquée et représentée  
 en figures*, 244
- Beschorner, A., 95
- Bible, OT*  
*Daniel*, 24  
 post-event predictions in -, 31
- Biles, Z., 80
- biography  
 ancient ~ modern, 209  
 Greek -, 298  
 Hellenistic -, 125, 134  
 patterns of praise and blame, 136
- Birch, A., 221
- Blänsdorf, J., 195, 197
- Bollansée, J., 133

- Bömer, F., 194  
 book-burning, 130  
 Boulliau, L., 291, 297  
 Bowie, E.L., 158  
 Brann, E.T.H., 157  
 Brant, Sebastian  
     printed ed. of Vergil, 239  
 Brisson, L., 114  
 Brown, Dan  
     *The Da Vinci Code*, 4  
 Brown, S., 5, 318, 326  
     *Mark's Other Gospel*, 310  
 Bücheler, F.  
     *Q. Ciceronis Reliquiae*, 179  
 Caesarion, 62  
 Calame, D., 119  
 Callu, J.-P., 211  
 Cambyzes  
     and the false-Smerdis, 56  
 Canfora, L., 100  
 Canopus, 292, 296  
     “the wings of -”, 290  
 Cantarella, R., 142  
 Carlson, S.C., 6, 311, 316, 317  
 Carpocrates, 308  
 Cataudella, Q., 340  
 Champlin, E., 104  
 Chariton  
     instances of deception, 160  
 Charmadas, 181  
 Chastagnol, A., 206  
 Cicero  
     *ad Quintum Fratrem*, 178  
     philosophical dialogues, 180  
 Clark, F., 95  
 Clemens Alexandrinus, 5, 303  
     *interpretatio christiana*, 337  
     *Letter to Theodore*, 303, 304, 318  
     quotation method, 336  
     reception of Greek literature, 331  
     scope of *Stromateis*, 332  
     use of mystery language, 305  
 Coarelli, F., 279, 280  
 Collins, J.J., 35  
 Cook, S.L., 38  
 Cooper, C.R., 132  
 Corcella, A., 101  
 Criddle, A.H., 316  
 Cyprian's letters, 348  
     textual history, 352  
 Dares Phrygius  
     *De excidio Troiae historia*, 95  
     Greek original?, 95  
 “decree of Diopeithes”, 128  
 De Ruyt, C., 278  
 Defoe, Daniel  
     *Robinson Crusoe*, 102  
 Demaratus, 57  
 Demosthenes, 150  
 Den Hengst, D., 210  
 Denniston, J.D., 150  
 desert fathers, 298  
 Detienne, M., 107  
 Dictys and Dares  
     and Homer, 104  
     gods' absence in -, 105  
     reader's role in -, 104  
     reception of -, 97  
 Dictys Cretensis, 94  
 Diercks, G.F., 350  
 δίκη, 118  
 Dillon, J., 338  
 Dio of Prusa  
     *Trojan Oration*, 97  
 Diodorus, 137  
 Diogenes Laertius, 125, 136  
 dissent literature, 211  
     ancient ~ modern, 213  
 Doak, B.R., 38  
 Dover, K.J., 125, 130, 136  
 dreams, 166  
 Drews, R., 137  
 Dué, C., 97  
 Dunlop Gibson, M., 233  
 Dyer, R., 113  
 Efron, B., 317  
 Ehrman, B., 316  
 εἶέν, 152  
 Eisenhut, W., 95  
 Eliade, M., 38  
 Emlyn-Jones, C., 88  
 ἐπαρχία, 228  
 epic poetry  
     *kleos* vs. *penthos*, 75  
 etymology  
     pseudo-, 280



- euphemism, 311  
 Euripides  
     alleged prosecution of -, 131  
 Eusebius  
     *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 228  
 Eussner, A., 178  
 Fabricius, J.A., 221  
 Faraone, Francesco, 98  
 feminism, 4  
     feminist scholarship, 5  
 Festy, M., 211  
 fiction  
     suspension of disbelief, 4  
 figure of speech  
     *hypophora* (*subiectio*), 151  
 Finkelberg, M., 75, 77, 83, 88  
 Flaubert, G.  
     *Madame Bovary*, 209  
 Fleck, F.F., 221  
 forgery, 4, 5, 190, 303, 316  
     and belief, 12, 14  
     and cultural criticism, 14  
     and pastiche, 113  
     ‘classical’ legal documents, 128  
     “deliberate clues”, 318  
     imitated handwriting, 322  
     interpolation, 201  
     literary -, 108  
     “*Pilatus-Schriften*”, 220  
     pseudepigraphy, 205  
     signs of -, 321  
     supposed interpolation, 347  
 Fraser, P.M., 293  
 Friedländer, P., 114  
 Fry, C., 207  
 Fusillo, M., 100  
 Gabba, E., 99  
 Gainsford, P., 104  
 Gallivan, P.A., 66  
 Garbugino, G., 95  
 García Martínez, F., 316  
 Geerard, M., 221  
 Geissler, P., 142  
 genre  
     generic mixture, 100  
     pseudo-documentarism, 96  
 Gershevitch, I., 56  
 Gibbon, E., 13  
 Gil, L., 141, 144  
 Godley, A.D., 102  
 Goldstein, J.A., 28  
 Goodspeed, E., 320  
 Goodstein, L., 3  
 Gospel of Mark  
     and Petr. *Satyricon*, 8  
 “Gospel of Peter”, 9  
 Gounelle, R., 231  
 Grafton, A., 12  
 Grayson, A.K., 27, 31, 44  
 greed  
     motivating pretenders, 61  
 Grossman, P., 294  
 Gültzow, H., 348, 350  
 Guthrie, W.K.C., 114  
 Guzmán Guerra, A., 220  
 Habermehl, P., 199  
 Hall, J.R.C., 312  
 Hamilton, N.T., 290  
 Hansen, M.H., 128  
 Hansen, W., 96  
 Harrison, W.R., 323  
 Hatzilambrou, R., 95  
 Hedrick, C.W., 313  
 Heinimann, G., 114  
 Helen  
     in Hom. Od. 4, 86  
 Heliodorus  
     instances of deception, 167  
 Heliogabalus, 71  
 “Hellenisation of Christianity”  
     ~“Christianisation of Hellenism”, 331  
 Henderson, J., 141, 147  
 Hendrickson, M.I., 178  
 Heraclitus, 342  
 Hermippus  
     comic writer, 127  
 Herodotus, 99  
 Hesiodus, 116  
 Hieronymus, 349  
 Hippocratic corpus, 205  
*Historia Augusta*  
     and literary theory, 207  
 historiography  
     *explanatory requirement*, 99  
 Greek -, 98  
 Hellenistic -, 100

- Holzberg, N., 96  
Homerus:, 43  
humor  
    in Dictys and Dares, 104  
Hunter, J.H.  
    *The Mystery of Mar Saba*, 6  
Hurtado, L.W., 299  
Hyperides  
    *In defense of Phryne*, 132  
identity  
    and impersonation, 66  
Isidorus, 104  
James, M.R., 10  
Jeffery, P., 6, 304, 313, 316  
Jenkins, P., 6  
Johannes Lydus  
    *Liber de mensibus*, 273  
    misinterpreting his sources, 284  
Johansen, J.D., 209  
Jones, A., 288, 290, 297  
Jones, C.P., 158  
Joseph, J.A., 322  
Kafka  
    *The Trial*, 210  
καὶ πᾶς, 144  
Kaibel, G., 143  
King, K., 3  
kleos  
    and truth, 78  
Koester, H., 311  
Kopenhagen, K.M., 322  
Kugel, J.L., 43  
Labiano, M., 152  
Lambert, W.G., 27  
Lana, I., 114  
Landry, D., 309, 316  
Lardet, P., 351  
latrones, 214  
Lefkowitz, M.R., 125, 128, 131  
Lenfant, D., 130  
Lenzi, A., 44  
Leontius of Neapolis  
    *Life of John the Almsgiver*, 290  
Leontychidas, 58  
*Lex Cornelia de iniuriis*, 212  
Ligota, C., 100  
literary technique  
    “reality effect”, 209  
literary theory  
    ancient -, 208  
Loi, V., 349  
Longman, T., 28  
Longus  
    instances of deception, 163  
look-alikes  
    as pretenders, 71  
Lucianus, 100, 158, 208  
    *True History*, 97  
lying  
    definitions of -, 159  
    non-verbal -, 163, 167  
Machinist, P., 47  
Macpherson, J.  
    the ‘Ossian poems’, 12  
Magnus, H., 195  
Maguire, J., 114, 118  
Manuwald, B., 114, 119  
Mar Saba  
    MS 22, 318  
    MS 65, 5, 303, 318  
Maraval, P., 231  
Marincola, J., 101  
Marsh, D., 158  
Martin, R., 82  
May, J.M., 181  
McDermott, W.C., 179  
McKenzie, J.S., 296  
McNeill, W.H., 93  
Mead, J.K., 34  
Meckler, M., 207  
Meibauer, J., 159  
Meineke, A., 142  
Menelaos, 85  
Merkle, S., 96  
Mesopotamian ‘prophetic’ texts, 26  
    mood of optimism, 31  
    *The Dynastic Text*, 30, 44  
    The Uruk Text, 30  
metaphor  
    bee-, 336  
    farming, 335  
    geographical -, 295  
    initiation, 305  
Meyboom, P.G.P., 293  
miracles  
    in *Anaphora Pilati*, 231

- Moles, J.L., 157  
 Momigliano, A., 66, 94  
 monks' lives, 298  
 Morgan, J.R., 158  
 Morris, E.  
     *Dutch*, 209  
 Morstein-Marx, R., 178  
 Müller, C.W., 117  
 Munro, J.A.R., 136  
 Murgia, C.E., 195  
 mysticism  
     early Jewish and Christian -, 316  
*mystikon euangelion*, 308  
 myth  
     ancient definition of -, 122  
     Endymion, 288  
     'last member of the race' -, 15  
     Sophistic -, 119  
 Mythistory, 93  
 mythopoesis, 15  
 myths  
     Platonic -, 118  
 Nachmanides, 42  
 Nagy, G., 43, 77, 86, 97  
 Nardo, D., 178, 183, 186  
 narrative  
     authentification, 98, 102, 219  
     first-person -, 220  
     intercalation, 310  
     persona, 102  
 Neoplatonism, 117  
 Nepos, 104  
 Nero  
     pretenders to be -, 66  
 Nestor, 82  
 Neujahr, M., 25, 31, 35, 38  
 Ní Mheallaigh, K., 96  
 Nietzsche, F.  
     *Der Antichrist*, 11  
 Nisbet, R.G.M., 178  
 Norwood, G., 142  
 Noth, M., 32, 40  
 Novatianus  
     *De trinitate*, 348, 350  
 Numenius, 335  
 Obbink, D., 95  
 Ogden, D., 158  
 Ogilby, John, 240  
 Olson, D., 148  
 Olson, S.D., 87  
 Olympiodorus, 287, 297  
 Osborn, A.S., 324  
 Osborne, C., 336  
 Oscar Wilde  
     *Salome*, 313  
 Osiris-Serapis, 294  
 Ostia, 281  
 Ovidius  
     'alternative versions' in *Met.*, 193  
 Palestina, 227  
 Panofsky, E., 293  
 Pantuck, A.J., 317, 319  
 Pappano, A.E., 66  
 paratext, 103, 105  
 Parker, P., 311  
 Parry, H., 89  
 Patterson, S.J., 311  
 Pease, A.S., 198  
 Pelling, C.B.R., 136  
*penthos*  
     in Hom. *Od.* 4, 75, 85  
 Pericles  
     in Greek comedy, 127  
 Perry, B.E., 100  
 personification, 119  
 Petronius  
     *Satyricon*, 9, 66  
 Philo  
     *On the Contemplative Life*, 308  
 philosophy  
     anc. - on human progress, 116  
 Philostratus  
     *Heroicus*, 97, 105  
 Phoenicia, 228  
 Plato  
     *Politicus*, 120  
     *Republic*, 107  
 Platonic dialogues, 145, 148  
 Platonic myths  
     addressee of -, 120  
     language of -, 118  
 Platonism  
     The Academy, 180  
 Plautus  
     *Amphitryon*, 61  
 Plutarchus, 125, 136

- Podlecki, A.J., 127
- poetics of truth  
~ poetics of fiction, 76
- political virtues  
in the Protagoras myth, 117
- Pompeius, 188
- Pontius Pilatus  
ἡγεμών, 223
- Porcacchi, Tommaso, 103
- post-event predictions  
and apocalyptic literature, 38  
and belief, 24  
in Deuteronomistic History, 40  
in the Hebrew Bible, 31
- Pratt, L.H., 79
- Preuschen, E., 9
- Price, R.M., 6
- Proclus, 121
- Prodicus, 119
- Prosperi, V., 104
- Protagoras  
imaginary 'impiety' trial, 128
- Protagoras myth*  
authorship, 114  
Neoplatonic commentators, 120
- pseudepigraphic texts, 205, 220, 348
- pseudo-documentarism, 96
- pseudo-Lactantius, 196
- pseudonymous writing  
in late antiquity, 39
- Ptolemaeus, 297  
*Canobic Inscription*, 287  
works, 287
- Ptolemaic Egypt, 60
- Pusey, E.B., 24
- Quesnell, Q., 320
- Quintus Cicero  
philosophical interest, 179
- Raaflaub, K.A., 127
- Ramelli, I., 8
- reader  
- response theory, 213  
role of -, 104
- reader reception  
humanist - of Dictys and Dares, 98  
of Dictys and Dares, 97
- readership  
of Hellenistic biographers, 135
- reading  
recreational -, 211
- "reality effect", 208
- reception  
neoplatonic - of Plato's dialogues, 122
- rhetoric, 182  
and philosophy, 181
- Richardson, C.C., 304, 311
- Roberts, J.J.A., 28
- Roman education, 180  
philosophical -, 184  
philosophy of rhetoric, 181
- Rome  
*forum boarium*, 279, 281
- Roth, C., 274
- Röwekamp, G., 348
- Rudich, V., 211
- Rufinus of Aquileia, 347
- Ruiz Yamuza, E., 119
- Russell, D.A., 137
- Russell, D.S., 39
- Salii, 275, 279, 282
- 'Sallustius'  
*Oratio in Ciceronem*, 206
- Salome  
dance of -, 315
- salt  
in ancient culture, 281
- Sandby, William, 240
- Satyrus  
*Life of Euripides*, 131, 136, 339
- Schauer, F., 160
- Schelestrate, E., 252
- Schmidt, D.D., 311
- Schwartz, E., 100
- Second Sophistic, 95, 100, 344
- "secret" Gospel of Mark, 304
- Seleucid Empire  
regal pretenders, 59
- Serapis, 292
- Sextus Empiricus, 129, 342
- simulatio*, 187
- Smith, E.R., 319
- Smith, M., 303, 308, 311  
Mar Saba MS 65, 5
- Smyth, H., 150
- Sophistic myth, 119  
Heracles at the crossroads, 119

- Spence, Joseph, 245  
 Speyer, W., 349  
 Stafford, F., 12, 15  
 Stang, C.M., 39  
 Stenger, J., 95  
 Stolz, Y., 290  
 Stone, I.F., 125  
 Strabo, 292  
 Straub, J., 207  
 Strauss-Clay, J., 79  
 Suerbaum, W., 245  
 Sweeney, M.A., 33  
 symbolism, 310  
 Syme, R., 206, 211  
 Syria-Palestina, 227  
 Tarrant, H., 298  
 Tarrant, R.J., 193  
 Tatum, J., 96, 183  
 Taylor, C., 36  
 Taylor, C.C.W., 117  
 Taylor, J.E., 308  
 Tertullianus, 219  
*The Book of Mormon*, 16, 24  
 "The Gospel of Jesus' Wife.", 3  
 Thein, K., 117  
 Thesleff, H., 117  
 Thilo, J.C., 221, 232  
 Thisted, R., 317  
 Thucydides, 99  
 Tiberius, 64  
 time  
     and history, 37  
     imagined 'kairotically', 36, 45  
 time, conceptions of -  
     pre-modern vs. modern, 36  
 Timon of Phlius, 129  
 Tischendorf, C., 221, 232  
 topos  
     autopsy, 98  
     spurious children, 61  
     trials  
         'ideological' - in class. Athens, 128  
 Tripolitis, A., 332  
 Trojan War  
     in Second Sophistic, 101  
 truth  
     historical -, 99  
     in Hom. *Od.* 3 and 4, 90  
 Tuplin, C.J., 65, 68  
 Untersteiner, M., 114  
 Valerius Maximus  
     on false heirs, 61  
 Van Riel, G., 114  
 Van Seters, J., 29  
*Vergilius Vaticanus*, 239, 252  
 verisimilitude, 208  
 von Rad, G., 41  
 von Soden, H., 351  
 Wallace, R.W., 125, 130  
 Waltke, B.K., 24  
 Watson, F.B., 7, 319  
 Webster, T.B.L., 341  
 Weigel, A., 68  
 Weinrich, H., 159  
 West, M.L., 93, 94  
 Westerink, L.G., 122  
 Weyer, H., 349  
 Whitmarsh, T., 96  
 Wilde, Oscar, 14  
 Williams, B., 99  
 Wiseman, T.P., 157, 177  
 Wisse, J., 181  
 Wolff, H.W., 41  
 Wolfson, H.A., 305  
 Woodward, K., 5  
 Xenophon  
     Socratic writings, 145  
 Xenophon of Ephesus  
     instances of deception, 164  
 Zeckhauser, R., 160